

# Mandela: Deal with Syria will go through

CABRO (AFP) — South African President Nelson Mandela said his country will sell weapons to Syria in defiance of any threats to impose sanctions, the Arabic newspaper Al Hayat reported on Wednesday. "If the Syrians are happy with the quality of South African technology we will sell them arms they have asked for and we will not care about any kind of threat," Mr. Mandela told the newspaper. "There are Western companies which sell weapons to Syria and they are not subject to any sanction. If American or British firms decide to sell weapons to Syria does anyone speak of imposing sanctions on them?" he asked. Mr. Mandela was speaking to the correspondent of the London-based newspaper on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum in the Swiss resort of Davos.



# Crown Prince to visit France, Switzerland

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Thursday leaves for Britain en route to France where he will Tuesday begin a three-day official visit for talks with French officials on bilateral relations, the Middle East peace process and other regional and international issues of mutual concern, the Crown Prince's office said in a press release. During his first official visit to France since 1988 which comes at the invitation of Prime Minister Alain Juppe, the Crown Prince will meet French President Jacques Chirac, Mr. Juppe and President of the French National Assembly Philippe Seguin as well as other French officials. On Thursday, Prince Hassan will leave for Switzerland, where he will meet with Swiss Vice-Chancellor and Foreign Minister Flavio Curi and Minister of Economics Jean Pascal Delamuraz. Prince Hassan will also meet with the former president of GATT, Arthur Duncall, and leading Swiss businessmen.

## Stunned Israel mourns 73 soldiers killed in deadliest air force accident

Helicopter collision raises concern over cost of occupying S. Lebanon

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — A stunned Israel observed a national day of mourning Wednesday as it began burying 73 soldiers killed in the deadliest military accident in the Jewish state.

"This is a national tragedy which unites all our people in pain and sadness, but we must not forget for a moment that we have to continue battling against those who would deny us peace," Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said during a special televised cabinet meeting.

Parliament and the military general staff held special mourning sessions following Tuesday night's collision of two Sikorsky-CH53 helicopters flying troops and ammunition into the Israeli-occupied buffer zone in South Lebanon.

Mr. Netanyahu cancelled a planned visit Wednesday to Jordan and visited the crash site in the Galilee area of northern Israel.

"We can't say yet exactly what happened, we're collecting information on the ground," the prime minister said while touring the area.

Mr. Netanyahu added that Israel "won't change our basic policy which is to defend the north of the country by any means necessary."

"But we promise to try to reduce the risks and dangers to which the soldiers are exposed so they can



The bodies of some of the 73 dead Israeli soldiers and airmen placed at the side of a road in an agricultural community along the border with Lebanon shortly after the mid-air collision and crash of two Israeli CH-53 army helicopters Tuesday night (Reuters photo)

continue their mission," he said.

The disaster also has put off a meeting planned Thursday between Mr. Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat with the two leaders now scheduled to hold talks on Sunday.

In Lebanon's first official reaction to the crash, which is expected to intensify debate within Israel over its 12-year occupation of the

border strip in South Lebanon, Foreign Minister Fares Bouez said he hoped the Jewish state had now "learned its lesson."

"The occupation is a wound for Lebanon but above all a bacchanalia for Israel, which because of its occupation (of South Lebanon) has lost more soldiers than in all its wars with Arab countries," he told reporters.

While most politicians bled off commentary on the accident and the Lebanese situation because of the mourning period, opposition Labour Party leader and former Prime Minister Shimon Peres said the deadly accident highlighted the costs of Mr. Netanyahu's failure to resume peace negotiations with Syria.

Israel accuses Syria of using Hizbollah attacks as a means of pressuring the

Jewish state into a peace agreement which would involve returning the occupied Golan Heights to Damascus.

But former army chief-of-staff Ehud Barak, who is the leading candidate to replace Mr. Peres at Labour Party leader, told the special Knesset session that now was not the time for political bickering.

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## King lauds Jordanian team's role in International Alliance for Arab-Israeli Peace and Copenhagen Declaration

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein received in his office Wednesday members of the Jordanian team who participated in Denmark recently — along with counterparts from Israel, Egypt and Palestine — in forming the "International Alliance for Arab-Israeli Peace" and issuing the "Copenhagen Declaration" which served as the basis for the Alliance.

His Majesty "expressed his appreciation for the role played and efforts made" by those Jordanians in contributing towards "reaching a comprehensive, just and durable peace in the region," the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said in reporting the meeting.

"His Majesty emphasised the importance of focusing all efforts, by various parties, towards the attainment of peace that is sought by the region's peoples and that which can guarantee security, prosperity and stability," Petra said, adding that the King reiterated "Jordan's support for endeavours, whether on the official or popular levels, which strengthen the peace process and help it in taking roots."

The Denmark meetings, which were attended by politicians, intellectuals and businessmen from the region as well as European representatives, sought to establish people-to-people contacts aimed at supplementing and encouraging efforts by governments to strengthen the search for peace in the Middle East.

In their Declaration, they pledged to "monitor the peace process in the Middle East and

work for ensuring popular support for it on a regional and international level."

They also urged all forces in the Middle East to join hands to rebuild a region free from arms race and free from strife and poverty.

"In this noble endeavour, we will seize every opportunity, knock on every door, lobby every government and attempt to spread our vision to serve the interests of present and future generations," they said.

In their meeting with the King, the members of the Jordanian team voiced appreciation of the King's continuous and tireless efforts towards the establishment of Arab-Israeli peace, Petra said. They pointed out to His Majesty's constructive role over the years in bringing about lasting peace, noting that steps taken by the King towards achieving this goal have justifiably won him the respect and appreciation of people from around the world.

The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh.

The Jordanian signatories of the Copenhagen Declaration are: Former Royal Court Chief Adnan Abu Odeh, former air force commander Lieutenant-General (ret) Ihsan Shurdom, former cabinet ministers Marwan Dudin and Tayseer Abdul Jabbar, businessman Ziad Salah and journalists Rami Khouri and George Hawatmeh.

## King urges university presidents to upgrade education

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday urged Jordanian university presidents to work towards raising the level of education at their institutions through opening up to and benefiting from modern scientific and technological developments with a view to benefiting the Jordanian society.

Addressing a meeting with the heads of state universities, in the presence of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, King Hussein emphasised the need to upgrade the quality of higher education and linking university education programmes with the basic needs of the Jordanian society.

The King and the university presidents reviewed the general university education in the Kingdom and the King listened to outlines of future programmes and plans for development.

The meeting, which was held at the Royal Court, was attended by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Royal Court Chief Awn Khasawneh, His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi, the King's cultural secretary, and Minister of Higher Education Abdullah Ensour.

In case of the IAF joining the government, "opposition (to the government) would be eliminated," he said.

As far as the IAF is concerned, a compromise with the government could strengthen the party's hands, providing it not only with executive power, but also with political influence that would enable it to attract more votes and consequently win more seats in Parliament.

A growing body of opinion among moderate elements in the IAF believes that, unless the Islamists abandon their ideological slogans and adopt pragmatic policies, their followers will turn away from them

## Blast at gas cylinder store kills 1, injures 6

By Rana Hussein

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — One person was killed and six others were injured, two of them critically, on Wednesday in an explosion at the Samrawi gas cylinder store in the Taharbour area.

Civil Defence Department Major General Theeb Ma'ani told reporters at the scene that the explosion was caused when one of the workers apparently dropped a gas cylinder near a fire which workers had started to warm themselves.

"The cylinder's safety valve broke and gas leaked caught up with the burning fire and caused the explosion," Gen. Ma'ani said.

Ten minutes of explosions rocked the Emir Hashem suburb at around 8:20 p.m.; about 300 gas cylinders exploded, causing 30-metre-high flames in the night sky and residents of the area fled from the scene.

"We were sitting in our house when we heard an explosion, and when we went to check it was like fireworks made by the gas cylinders which were flying in the night sky," said Murad Nofal, a resident of the area.

According to the CDD

chief, about 5,000 gas cylinders were kept in the store but the fire reached only 300.

Gen. Ma'ani told reporters the fire was brought under control in 25 minutes.

Firefighters had difficulty in reaching the scene as the road leading to the store was narrow and unpaved, only allowing fire engines and ambulances to approach the scene from one direction.

Although there are few houses in the area of the store, residents said they have made many complaints to the authorities that the store was too close to the residential area.

The CDD director said that his department had asked to meet with the concerned authorities to try to solve the problem of gas store.

"We want to study the alternatives and other locations for storing gas cylinders. The store should be in a deserted and safe area and at the same time it should also meet international standards and regulations," Gen. Ma'ani said.

The residents also complained of the way the gas cylinders were being unloaded from the trucks.

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## Palestinians fear U.S. assurance to Israel, say it is too early to let Netanyahu have Arab fruits of agreement

By Lamis Andoni

BOSTON — The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has sent a letter to the American administration rejecting American assurances to Israel that the latter had the right to determine West Bank territory that it would retain control over as "military locations."

American and Palestinian sources said that the letter, which was sent to special envoy Dennis Ross' office, was added to the "records" of the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli talks.

Palestinian officials argue that the letter absolves the Palestinians from accepting the American-Israeli interpretation of who defines "the military locations."

"The letter made it clear we are not obliged by the American or Israeli interpretation of who defines the military locations," a senior Palestinian negotiator told Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times.

According to American administration sources, the Palestinian letter was added to the records but is not part of the Hebron protocol and its attached Notes of Record.

A letter sent by former Secretary of State Warren Christopher to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu states that Israel will designate the "military locations" that the Jewish state will retain in the rural areas of the West Bank.

An agreement mediated

by His Majesty King Hussein stated the Israeli troops redeployment in the rural areas will start next March and should be completed by mid-1998.

Although American officials say that the letter of assurances was not part of the agreement, Palestinians are concerned that the U.S. position will support Israeli attempts to keep a big part of the West Bank under its control.

American officials argue that it is not useful to dwell on or prejudice the outcome of future negotiations. But the different interpretations have fuelled concern among Palestinian officials and negotiators that now the pressure on Israel has eased it will continue to expand settlements

and annex Arab East Jerusalem.

The apparent lack of trust that Palestinians display in the continuity of the process underscore the fact that the Hebron protocols meant three different things for the three parties involved: to the U.S. it was a breakthrough that salvaged the peace process; to Israel it was a testimony to the Likud's commitment to peace; to the Palestinians it was a crucial step to ensure that they do not remain stuck in fragmented enclaves.

Three weeks after signing the agreement, the Palestinians are still waiting for the next step to come while Israel and the U.S. are waiting for the Arab World that had

slowed down normalisation of relations with Tel Aviv to accelerate the process now that Benjamin Netanyahu has proved his "commitment to peace."

"Israel has taken a very important step, it needs to be reciprocated," a source in the American administration said. He explained that it was time for the Arab governments which committed themselves to broadening ties with Israel to take the initiative.

But this is exactly what the Palestinians fear. Now that the pressure has eased on Israel, Mr. Netanyahu will not take steps towards solving the many pending issues in the interim-agreements, they say.

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## Kabariti, Islamists in dialogue over coalition, but outcome remains unpredictable

By Francesca Ciriaci

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and leading members from Jordan's main opposition party, the Islamic Action Front (IAF), are engaged in a dialogue to form a coalition government, ahead of the parliamentary elections scheduled for this autumn, but it is yet unclear whether the project could materialise, given the enormous obstacles standing in the way.

For the prime minister, a coalition with the Islamists would serve some useful purposes and therefore he would want to explore the possibility, politicians and analysts say.

In fact, in a speech he gave before Parliament

after the conclusion of the budget debate in December, he said his hands were open and stretched to work jointly with the Islamists, should they be willing and ready to work with him.

But, officials say, there are red lines, such as the peace treaty with Israel and the IMF-prescribed economic adjustment programme, beyond which Mr. Kabariti would not go to accommodate the Islamists in a new or a reshuffled Cabinet.

"The government has opened a dialogue with all parties, including the IAF, and channels of communication with the Islamists are open," an official source told the Jordan Times this week.

"The Islamists' participation has not been ruled out,

but whoever joins the government will have to share the government's points of view on such essential issues as the peace process and normal relations with Israel," the source said.

Moreover, Mr. Kabariti would not be interested in including the Islamists in the government as a "window dressing" exercise, or, at the same time, in splitting the IAF ranks through the inclusion of a few dissidents.

Mr. Kabariti "seeks a representative and effective participation from the mainstream of the IAF," the source added.

Should the Islamists join Mr. Kabariti in a coalition, it would be the first time since the 1991 government of Prime Minister Mudar Badran, that they would do

so.

The prime minister would look upon the success of such an endeavour highly positively, since it would not only widen his popular base but also strengthen his hands as a member of the club of the prime ministers who brought the Islamists in government, analysts say.

This would be the first time that the Islamists join the government since the signing of the peace treaty and Mr. Kabariti could enter Jordan's history as the first prime minister to bring the Islamists in a government committed to the peace process and involved in normalisation of relations with Israel.

Besides, the inclusion of the Islamists in the government would also provide

the consensus needed to introduce major amendments to the election law which Mr. Kabariti seeks, noted Minister of Housing and Public Works Abdul Hadi Majali, who is also the secretary general of Al Ahd, which has five ministers in the Kabariti government.

"Mr. Kabariti made clear in his speech before Parliament after the approval of the election law (two weeks ago) that only one aspect of the law, (the one-person, one-vote formula), had been addressed (by the legislators) so far," Mr. Majali said.

"But Mr. Kabariti has also pointed to the need of modernising the current law in many other aspects, such as the redrawing of voting districts, and this would require a broader-based

coalition government including the opposition," Mr. Majali noted.

In case of the IAF joining the government, "opposition (to the government) would be eliminated," he said.

As far as the IAF is concerned, a compromise with the government could strengthen the party's hands, providing it not only with executive power, but also with political influence that would enable it to attract more votes and consequently win more seats in Parliament.

A growing body of opinion among moderate elements in the IAF believes that, unless the Islamists abandon their ideological slogans and adopt pragmatic policies, their followers will turn away from them

and support instead other parties more effective in the country's body politic.

Seeking a more influential position and a more effective role, members from the moderate wing of the IAF, led by Abdullah Akaleh, publicly declared last week that the government and the Islamists could find "common ground" for a compromise.

Widely considered as the leader of the "doves" in the IAF, Dr. Akaleh last week addressed a Muslim Brotherhood meeting with a paper reportedly "promoting the group's participation in the government."

He was quoted by the Arabic press as inviting "the Brotherhood to be more pragmatic and reconsider its approach in order to play a more effective role

in the governing process."

"The expression 'common ground' was the keyword in Akaleh's speech," the Al Ra'i Arabic daily commented in a news analysis on Tuesday.

Furthermore, the Jordan Times learned from informed sources that, during a close-door meeting held with other "doves" on Friday, Dr. Akaleh warned that, if the general elections were to be held as scheduled, this fall, the IAF would not win "more than 12 seats, three down from its current 15."

Declining to disclose the details of a Monday meeting with Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, Dr. Akaleh told the Jordan Times that "contacts with

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# Iraq faces billions of dollars in Gulf environmental claims

GENEVA (R) — Kuwait and its allies, including the United States, have filed billions of dollars' worth of claims against Iraq for environmental damage caused during the Gulf war, diplomats said.

Baghdad's troops are alleged to have discharged millions of barrels of oil into the Gulf in January 1991 and ignited more than 700 oilwells in Kuwait the following month before fleeing a U.S.-led multinational liberation force.

At least 10 states met the Feb. 1 deadline for filing environmental claims at the U.N. compensation Commission (UNCC), according to diplomats. No overall total was available.

Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Iran — which border the Gulf — each filed claims worth billions of dollars, while smaller claims were submitted by Turkey, Britain, the United States, Australia, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands.

Lawyers at the UNCC will take months to review evidence submitted, contained in hundreds of cartons of documents.

Diplomats hope that its governing body, made up of the same 15 members as the Security Council, will name arbitrators by year-end. They will assess environmental damages and eventually announce successful claims.

Kuwait filed environmental claims against Iraq with an assessed value of \$16.3 billion.

while the U.S. claim was nearly \$8.8 million, according to diplomats from the two states. The sums sought by other countries were not immediately available.

"Iraq's deliberate release of millions of barrels of oil into the Gulf resulted in extensive damage to the coastal and marine environment," Kuwait's Public Authority for Assessment of Compensation (PAAC) for damages resulting from Iraqi invasion said in a statement issued in Geneva.

Kuwait's claims cover damage to the sea and coast, from oil lakes, damage to the terrestrial environment, to groundwater resources and to human health, according to the statement.

"The damages quantified in the claims may increase as these damages continue to take their toll on the environment," it said. A Kuwaiti diplomat said research continued into the effect of oil pollution on the marine environment and soil.

In some places, oil lakes had penetrated a few metres down and had harmed the water table. Oil could enter the food chain through fish, according to the diplomat.

"A lot of these particles could be carcinogenic," she added.

The U.S. claim of \$8.8 million, submitted last Friday, seeks compensation for eight U.S. departments or agencies for scientific and technical efforts to help the Gulf clean-up. They are: the Department of Energy, the Envi-

ronmental Protection Agency, the agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, the Department of Commerce, the National Science Foundation, the U.S. Army Centre for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine of the Department of Defence, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Atlanta-based Centers for Disease Control.

The Gulf war reparations fund, set up by the Security Council in 1991 to assess damages caused by Iraq's invasion and seven-month occupation of Kuwait, has received more than \$220 billion in claims from individuals, companies and governments.

Funded by governmental contributions and seized Iraqi assets, it has been perpetually cash-strapped. So far it has only paid out \$13.5 million to 4,000 priority claimants who proved serious personal injury or death of a close relative.

But it has been boosted by the implementation since December of the U.N. and Iraq "oil-for-food deal," under which it is to get 30 per cent of revenues, or \$100 million monthly.

So far, it has received \$64.8 million from the proceeds of Iraqi oil exports, a U.N. spokeswoman said on Tuesday.

The fund hopes by the end of the month to pay out \$142 million in individual claims against Iraq which have already been approved.



STATUE CLEANED: Iraqi workers clean a statue of President Saddam Hussein at a park in Baghdad (Reuters photo)

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Three million Muslims pray in Mecca

DUBAI (R) — Up to three million Muslims thronged the Holy City of Mecca in Saudi Arabia on Tuesday night marking Laylat Al Qadr, the night when the Holy Koran was revealed to the Prophet Mohammad in the year 610. Saudi newspapers said the region's traffic department estimated that up to three million worshippers offered prayers at the Grand Mosque in Mecca, one of Islam's holiest sites. All the three floors of the holy mosque were filled to capacity with worshippers spilling into the lanes and bylanes around the...complex, the English-language Arab News said. Laylat Al Qadr falls in the last 10 days of the holy fasting month of Ramadan, due to end this week. Up to two million Muslims usually perform the annual hajj pilgrimage to Mecca and nearby Medina.

### UAE to free 215 prisoners for 'Eid

ABU DHABI (AP) — Rulers in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) have ordered the release of 215 prisoners for next week's 'Eid Al Fitr holiday, newspapers said Wednesday. UAE President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan ordered 100 prisoners freed from the capital Abu Dhabi and its satellite city of Al 'Ain. Sheikh Zayed will pay the fines and debts of the prisoners, the Arabic-language daily Al Khaleej said. Sheikh Sultan Al Qassbi, ruler of Sharjah, one of the seven sheikhdoms that make up the UAE, ordered the release of 115 sharjah prisoners for good behaviour, the paper said.

### Dubai, Sydney to coordinate in police training

DUBAI (AFP) — Senior police officers from Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) will travel to Sydney next week to discuss training cooperation with the New South Wales police department, the Australian consulate said Wednesday. The team will leave for Australia on Monday for a week-long visit to "look at the way police are trained in Australia... look at cooperation on the training side," a consulate official said. Contacts between the UAE and Australia have been increasing with an Emirates Airline flight from Dubai to Melbourne established last year.

### Swiss woman held for marrying 2 Egyptians

CAIRO (AP) — A Swiss woman suspected of marrying two Egyptian men is being held by police for questioning, Egypt's official Middle East News Agency reported. The agency's Monday night report said the 40-year-old woman, whose name was transliterated from Arabic as Heidi Tregilder, was arrested in the Red Sea resort of Sharm Al Sheikh, 400 kilometres southeast of Cairo. It said police were keeping her in custody for 15 days pending the completion of their investigation, but did not say when she was arrested or what she was doing in Egypt. A Swiss embassy spokesman in Cairo confirmed the arrest, but refused to give the woman's name or any other details. The Egyptian agency said the Swiss woman was married to Mohammed Dia-Eddine, 26, a driver she met in Switzerland, and Adel Hamid Mansour, 30, a butcher she met in Egypt.

### Turkish MPs reject new Ciller probe

ANKARA (R) — The Turkish parliament on Wednesday decided against setting up an inquiry into Deputy Prime Minister Tansu Ciller that could have sent her to the supreme court on corruption charges. Deputy parliament speaker Uluc Gurkan, told the house that deputies rejected by 269 votes to 259 an opposition proposal to probe allegations that Ms. Ciller was involved in corruption at the state-owned Turban hotel and tourism company.

## Gulf of Aqaba Environmental Action Plan — Jordan

The Environmental Department within the Aqaba Region Authority (ARA) has vacancies for the following positions to be filled immediately:

**A Manager** to coordinate the administrative, research and monitoring, education, revenue generation, enforcement and visitor use aspects of the Red Sea Marine Peace Park. He/She shall possess a university degree and must have demonstrated supervisory skills, be an excellent communicator and computer proficient. The ideal candidate will have a heightened appreciation for the environment. He/She will have the ability to work effectively with the public and private sectors and coordinate multi-organisational projects.

**A Coastal Zone Management Specialist**, who will be hired to implement Coastal Zone Management (CZM) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) guidelines applicable to Coastal Zone Management. This specialist shall have the following professional qualifications and skills:

- University degree in environmental management, natural sciences, economics, engineering, architecture, urban and regional planning, or other pertinent field(s);
- A minimum 3-5 years' work experience in management, planning, design or another professional occupation with application to CZM and EIA implementation.
- Ability to work effectively with business leaders as well as professionals in the engineering, planning and design professions; and
- Arabic and English language proficiency is a must.

**A Computer Engineer:** This candidate will have the following professional qualifications:

- University degree in computer/electronic engineering with experience in programming, database management, or related skills;
- A minimum 3-5 years work experience in computer programming or data base management; Experience in GIS is an asset;
- Ability to work effectively with ARA Environment Department administrative, and technical persons;
- Demonstrated ability to teach technical applications related to computer programming and database management; and
- Arabic and English language proficiency is a must.

Positions to commence immediately on a yearly contract. For further inquiries and submission of CVs not later than February 28th, 1996, contact:

Aqaba Region Authority  
P.O. Box 21  
Aqaba — Jordan  
Fax: (962-3) 314206  
(962-3) 314200

## Iran confirms writer held

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran on Wednesday confirmed it has arrested dissident writer Faraj Sarkuhi, whose disappearance had aroused concern in Western nations, as he was trying to leave the country.

The government newspaper Iran, quoting a police official, said Mr. Sarkuhi and his brother Ismael had been seized in a village near the southern port of Bushehr on Monday as they were planning to leave the country illegally.

They were waiting for two smugglers to secretly ferry them across the Gulf to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the official said, adding that the men planned ultimately to join their brother in Sweden, where he is living as a political refugee.

The official said the police had been looking for Mr. Sarkuhi since he was reported missing last week by his family.

Germany's Foreign Ministry said Tuesday that its embassy in Tehran had been informed by Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Vaezi of Mr. Sarkuhi's arrest and plans to put him on trial for "illegal immigration."

## Clerides keeps option of Greek warplanes open

NICOSIA (AFP) — Cypriot President Glafos Clerides, whose decision to buy Russian anti-aircraft missiles sparked threats of attack by Turkey, has left open the option on whether to base Greek warplanes on the divided island.

"The air base is expected to be finished by the end of the year," the Greek-Cypriot leader said in a televised press conference late Tuesday, referring to a joint air and naval base being built in southwest Cyprus.

"We have not yet decided whether Greek military planes will be deployed there or if they just use the base for refueling," said Mr. Clerides. Tension rose sharply on Cyprus after the government announced in early January that it is buying S-300 surface-to-air missiles from Russia. Ankara warned of military action but the crisis was defused, following U.S. mediation, as Mr. Clerides announced that the missiles would not be ready for delivery for another 16 months.

Mr. Clerides also told reporters on Tuesday that he would reject any confederal solution granting the Turkish-Cypriots their own state. "Any American initiative leading to this objective is bound to fail," he warned.

## UNHCR says no plans for new Turkish Kurd camp

GENEVA (R) — The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said on Tuesday her agency had no plans to open a new camp for Turkish Kurds in northern Iraq as chances of it being taken over by "political and military elements" were very high.

Sadako Ogata said that the agency could not assist the Kurdish refugees in the Atrush camp — which

Turkey says is a base for independence-seeking Kurdish guerrillas — as long as they remained under the sway of military and political leaders.

The UNHCR closed down its aid operations last month in Atrush camp, where up to 14,000 people who fled the Kurdish conflict in southeast Turkey in 1994 remain in tents and makeshift huts.

"We can't protect Atrush as such, and we have decided

not to set up another camp of this type because chances of it being taken over by the political and military elements of the camp is very high," Ms. Ogata told in an interview.

The UNHCR withdrew from Atrush in January, saying Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) guerrillas were blocking its operations.

Ms. Ogata said Shamsul Bari, UNHCR's director of the northern African and Mid-

dle East region, was in northern Iraq negotiating with leaders of the refugees in Atrush camp.

She said camp leaders had asked the UNHCR to continue its assistance and perhaps move to another area where they would be more comfortable.

"But we can't do that," she said. "It's a very dangerous area there. We're not in the camp. They chased us out."

## JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

### PROGRAMME TWO

- 13:30 Cartoon
- 14:30 They Came From Outer Space
- 15:00 Feature Film: "Space Chase"
- 16:50 Call For Prayer and Iftar
- 17:30 French Programmes
- 19:30 News Headlines
- 19:33 Parenthood
- 20:00 Islam in the West
- 20:30 Babylon 5 (Science Fiction)
- 21:10 Kung Fu-The Legend
- 22:00 News in English
- 22:35 Islam in a Changing World
- 23:00 Feature Film: Johnny's Girl
- 01:00 Ramadan Talks

### PRAYER TIMES

- 05:04 Fajr
- 06:22 Sunrise Duha
- 11:50 Dhuhr
- 14:51 Asr
- 17:17 Maghreb
- 18:36 Isha

### CHURCHES

- St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifheh, Tel. 810740
- Assemblies of God Church Tel. 632785
- St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
- Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
- De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
- Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366
- Anglican Church Tel. 652826

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Amman International Church Tel. 827126

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.

Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691.

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology. Cold weather conditions will prevail with skies partly cloudy and winds easterly moderate, in Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Mini/Max. Temperatures

Amman ..... 02/05

Aqaba ..... 05/15

Dead Sea ..... 05/08

Jordan Valley ..... 05/15

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 04, Aqaba 15 Humidity

readings: Amman 61 per cent, Aqaba 45 per cent.

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

#### NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Jihad Sammour ..... 765018

Dr. Ghaleb Zawaideh ..... 736011

Dr. Khalidoun Asfour ..... 699440

Dr. Bilal Al Sayed ..... 89280

Firas pharmacy ..... 661912

Ferdows pharmacy ..... 778336

Al Asena pharmacy ..... 637055

Al Salam pharmacy ..... 636730

Yacoub pharmacy ..... 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy ..... 637660

Natroukh pharmacy ..... 623672

Najib pharmacy ..... 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Mazen Abu Al Rub 276852

Al Quds pharmacy ..... 1-ZARQA:

Dr. Akram Haddad ..... 983550

Khalifeh pharmacy ..... 985417

### EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192 621111

637777

Fire Brigade ..... 617101

Blood Bank ..... 775121

Highway Police ..... 843402

Traffic Police ..... 896390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints ..... 605800

Price Complaints ..... 661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints ..... 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints ..... 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) ..... 121

Overseas Calls ..... 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs ..... 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television ..... 773111

Radio Jordan ..... 774111

Water Authority ..... 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority ..... 815615

Electric Power Company ..... 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

### HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre ..... 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity ..... 644281/6

Akileh Maternity ..... 643441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Mahas, J. Amman ..... 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital ..... 669131

University Hospital ..... 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital ..... 66727/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali ..... 664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen ..... 777101/3

Al-Bashir, ..... 775111/26

Army, Marks ..... 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital ..... 602240/30

Amal Hospital ..... 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery ..... 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital ..... 09983323

Zarqa National Hospital ..... 09900560

Ibn Sina Hospital 09986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital ..... 09990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital ..... 02175555

Greek Catholic Hospital ..... 02172775

Im Al Nafess Hospital ..... 02147100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital ..... 03314111

### FOR THE TRAVELLER

#### QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen

Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200 where it should always be verified.

Information on other flights are supplied on phone 08 (52700) or 08(53250).

### ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

07:15 Dhahran (add) (RJ)

07:15 Sanaa (RJ)

08:15 Bombay (RJ)

09:15 Riyadh (RJ)

09:45 New Delhi (RJ)

10:05 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)

10:05 Beirut (RJ)

10:30 Colombo (RJ)

16:25 London (RJ)

17:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

18:10 Athens (RJ)

19:00 Moscow (RJ)

19:15 Abu Dhabi, Al 'Ain (RJ)

19:25 Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)

19:45 Rome (RJ)

07:45 Kuala Lumpur (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

11:00 Doha (Q7)

12:40 Doha (GF)

13:30 Riyadh (SV)

14:10 Sharjah (AH)

15:15 Damascus (Q7)

16:15 Dubai (EK)



VS IN BRIEF

n Muslims pray in Mecca

Up to three million Muslims thronged the Great Mosque in Mecca on Tuesday night for the night of Al Qadr, the night when the Holy Quran was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad in the year 610.

The region's traffic department reported that up to three million worshippers offered the three thousand of the holy mosque and the complex, with the English language and the Arabic language, the last 10 days of the month of Ramadan, due to end on Tuesday night, Muslims usually perform the Hajj to Mecca and many Muslims.

215 prisoners for Eid

APL — Rulers in the United Arab Emirates ordered the release of 215 prisoners for Eid Al Fitr. The prisoners were held in the Abu Dhabi prison. The prisoners were held in the Abu Dhabi prison. The prisoners were held in the Abu Dhabi prison.

to coordinate in police training

APL — Senior police officers from Dubai and Abu Dhabi will be in Jordan to discuss police training cooperation with the Jordanian police. The officers will be in Jordan to discuss police training cooperation with the Jordanian police. The officers will be in Jordan to discuss police training cooperation with the Jordanian police.

an held for marrying 2 Egyptians

APL — A Swiss woman suspected of marriage fraud is being held by police in Jordan. The woman is being held by police in Jordan. The woman is being held by police in Jordan.

IPs reject new Ciller probe

APL — The Turkish parliament has rejected a probe into the activities of the Turkish intelligence services in Jordan. The parliament has rejected a probe into the activities of the Turkish intelligence services in Jordan. The parliament has rejected a probe into the activities of the Turkish intelligence services in Jordan.

Arabic Kurd camp

APL — A new camp for Arabic Kurds has been established in Jordan. The camp is for Arabic Kurds. The camp is for Arabic Kurds.

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HRH Princess Basma's daughter Farah Daghestani Wednesday distributes food and other items to needy families in the Muqableh district of Amman in the course of the Ramadan Charity Campaign (Petra photo)

British envoy arrives to discuss Middle East cooperation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Edward Chaplin, the British foreign secretary's special envoy on the Organisation for Cooperation in the Middle East (OCME) arrived in Amman last night at the end of a tour in the region.

The purpose of Mr. Chaplin's mission is to brief governments in the Middle East on the foreign secretary's proposal for an OCME, according to a British embassy spokesperson.

Mr. Chaplin will hold discussions with HRH Crown Prince Hassan to discuss the OCME proposal, the product of discussions between Crown Prince Hassan, and Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind, the spokesperson said.

He will also meet with HRH Prince Talal Ben Mubammad, His Majesty King Hussein's national security advisor, and Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti.

Centrist party proposes election law amendment

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Al Ahd centrist party, the second largest after the Islamic Action Front, is proposing an amendment to the current elections law to raise the number of seats in Parliament to 125 from the current number of 80 and introduce mixed-party tickets and independent candidates.

According to a position paper, prepared by the party and published Wednesday in Al Rai Arabic daily, Al Ahd calls for 100 members of Parliament to be elected as individuals and 25 on party tickets.

The paper also proposes that for parties to win seats according to this proposal they should collect at least five per cent of the total vote.

Al Ahd is led by Minister of Public Works Abdul Hadi Majali and includes six deputies in the Lower House of Parliament as well as five ministerial portfolios.

According to the party proposal, the 126 seats should be distributed taking into account both demography and geography.

It also proposes that candidates be of Jordanian origin, have held Jordanian nationality for at least 10 years, not retain dual nationality nor be a member of an illegal organisation which opposes the Constitution.

The paper also proposed that armed forces personnel be given the right to vote, a right which is currently legally denied them.

It advocates simplifying voting procedures and that the election process be supervised by the judiciary.

Last week, Parliament passed an amendment to the election law which enacted a measure, introduced in 1993, granting each voter only one vote.

This so-called one-person, one-vote allows voters to vote for only one candidate in their districts for one seat out of a number of seats ranging from two to five.

Suhor through the ages...

By Nadia Mukhlis  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The suhor is the last meal before dawn which fasting Muslims are allowed during the holy month of Ramadan, as fasting is mandated as lasting from dawn till sunset, following the dictates of the Koran.

Waking early for suhor to eat and drink before the daily fast commences is a Ramadan ritual which Muslims practise around the world.

The muezzin ascends the minarets to call out for those who are slumbering to awaken for suhor, several times during the night using religious words, poems and speeches to draw the fasters' attention.

As an example, there is a common call "Muslims, Suhor will begin as daylight will come, all fasters arise to sate your thirst and hunger for fasting time will soon commence."

An Egyptian historian, Dhafir Adib, author of "Ramadan in the old ages" states that during Ramadan nights (in the 12th-14th centuries) men would gather in mosques after iftar (the first meal to break the fast) to perform the isha and taraweh prayers.

In the Amr mosque in Fostat, Egypt it is said that after the men completed their prayers, they would gather in open-air verandas to discuss religious matters, and a quote is attributed to this time.

The stars that we see have no reflection, if they abandon the skies then we prohibit fasting people from eating.

It was therefore said that the stars formed what was later called "the suhor lamp" that which would light the skies in darkness and depart when the light broke out in the sky.

As for the Khalifa, Mr. Adib affirms, he would sit on a large balcony, after the iftar, to listen to the Koran as recited by the muezzins and other religious men and then discuss different aspects concerning religion and Islam as well as the greatness of Ramadan, the holy month of peace, goodwill and forgiveness.

Later in the evening, the preachers would begin to glorify the Khalifa and note his accomplishments until midnight.

At midnight, the Khalifa, accompanied by his close companions and ministers, would give orders to set a grand suhor dining table and distribute gifts and sweets to all, as well as to bring home for the children.

Another famous figure who comes out in the month of Ramadan in the Arab and Muslim world is the musaharati, according to Mr. Adib.

The musaharati perambulates in the streets late at night, holding a drum in one hand and a drum stick in the other calling for people to arise for the "Suhor" before dawn and fasting time begins.

The musaharati historically only made his rounds in the wealthier neighbourhoods, repeatedly beating his drum three times and chanting "Mohammad is God's Prophet" then loudly praising the owner of the house and wishing his family well, telling funny stories of old as well as religious ones.

He would then await remuneration of either money or goods from the house owners.

Traditionally, each block would have its own musaharati who would begin his journey two hours after the iftar, subsequent to finishing the last isha prayer, Mr. Adib affirmed.

During Ramadan, there are generally two morning calls for prayers, the first one is called the Ibrar, which states that Imsak has commenced and that fasting is to begin.

The second morning call announces that morning prayers are to take place.

The calls are separated by an interval of 15 minutes.

... and celebration of Eid Al Fitr in times past

by Nadia Mukhlis  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Fatimid Era demonstrated immense interest and preparedness for the end of the holy month of Ramadan and the feast of Eid Al Fitr.

During the final celebrations, the caliph (a ruler of the Islamic world) historically distributed sweets and clothing unrestrictedly to individuals as well as the general public.

In 1121, the cost of the garments, distributed by the caliph, was estimated to be 20,000 dinars and the garments were reputed to be beautiful clothes woven from excellent fabrics.

Eid expenses were historically provided from the government, private donations and money from the Dar Al Fitr, a house which gathered token sums from Muslims, both fasting and not, at the end of every Ramadan month.

This token sum was said to be equivalent to one meal and the government would annually decide on the fee.

The Dar Al Fitr was also responsible for the preparation of Eid cakes and biscuits, a task upon which they embarked since the month of Rihab, two lunar months before Ramadan.

The cooking budgets were said to exceed 16,000 dinars in 1121, for the purchase of flour, sugar, honey, almonds, walnuts, sesame, flower-water and pistachios along with handkerchiefs, silk sheets and covers.

The caliph was also said to gather with his minister, close companions, princes, imams, Koran readers, muezzins and the general public to celebrate the night of the Eid with prayers, Koranic recitals and prayers for the Prophet Muhammad until the break of dawn.

Tradition says that the caliph would sit in a recessed sitting room with a raised floor opening onto the main courtyard through an arcade, listening to an emotional recitation of Koranic verses.

The reciters would later be rewarded with money, clothing and food from the caliph.

During that time, guests from different regions would pay their respects to the caliph, stable owners would exhibit their horses, fitted in modern colourful saddles, in front of the caliph.

Historical documents maintain that the display would reach up to 1,000 horses and that after the show they would return to the study of the Koran in accordance with a Koranic verse "God has given people the love of desires and accumulated riches like gold and silver and saddled horses which are life's joy and pleasure."

On the last day of Ramadan, the caliph might join his minister, princes, judges and guests for Futur, a generously stocked dining table, with a silver tray for the caliph in which was found coloured stuffed dates with nuts smelling of saffron.

The minister had a similar dining table, lacking only the caliph's private tray, which he would open to the public.

Director of Al Harem Al Sharif Rafik Khathib described the rationale behind the fitra (money given to the poor at the end of each Ramadan) as that the Prophet Mohammad was cited as saying "The fitra is a religious duty expected from all Muslims, male or female, young or old."

In early Islam, the fitra was given in the form of food to the poor and usually the country's delicacy, Mr. Khathib said, but the Hanafi religious creed decreed that the fitra be given in the form of money, equivalent to the expenditure of the meal to be distributed.

Mr. Khathib stated that the Ministry of Awqaf estimated the sum this year to be 600 fils for each Muslim irrespective of if they are fasting or not.

In the Fatimid Era, the Eid Al Fitr prayers were accomplished with celebrations, the caliph would dress in white and lead a great march from his palace to the mosque, soldiers formed two lines to salute the caliph and after finishing his prayers he recited the Eid lecture, usually dictated by the chief of justice at the time.

The Eid prayers take place in the morning after sunrise and at this time of the year means approximately seven in the morning, Mr. Khathib told the Jordan Times.

Department warns of frosty roads

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Kingdom will continue to endure three nights of very cold, frosty weather with temperatures dipping below zero degrees centigrade, the Department of Meteorology forecast Wednesday.

Department Spokesman Jamal Mousa told the Jordan Times that the frost is caused by a very dry and very cold air mass affecting the country from Siberia.

Winds will be easterly, he said, and rain is not expected.

Temperatures are not expected to rise above a maximum of four degrees and will drop to minus two degrees at night, he added.

The cold will be especially acute in the mountainous and badia regions of Jordan.

Mr. Mousa said that the very cold weather will freeze water pipes as well as ice on the roads and that even in the normally warmer areas of the Jordan Valley, extra precautions are needed to protect the water pipe networks and water metres.

Earlier, the department reported snowfall on the Maan and Shobak governorates in the south and parts of the northern Ajloun governorate during Tuesday and Wednesday night while the civil defence authorities reported slippery roads hindering travel in the northern and southern regions.

Man dies in accident en route to pilgrimage

AMMAN (J.T.) — One Jordanian died and nine others were injured in a road accident while on their way to perform the lesser pilgrimage from Medina to Mecca in Saudi Arabia, according to a report published by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Wednesday.

Acting upon directives from His Majesty King Hussein, HRH Crown Prince Hassan issued military instructions to transport the dead and wounded from Saudi Arabia to Jordan on board a military helicopter.

The helicopter also carried a medical team to the accident site approximately 120 kilometres south of Medina.

The deceased was identified as Sadeq Shreideh and the nine injured, including the driver, were riding a bus which overturned while passing over a culvert on the way to Mecca, according to an official report.

The report said that five of the injured have been admitted to the King Hussein Medical Centre and the rest were admitted to the Princess Raya Bini Al Hussein Government Hospital in Deir Abi Said, in the Irbid governorate.

Ambulances from the Royal Medical Services of the Jordanian Armed Forces, the Civil Defence Department and the Royal Jordanian Air Force transported the injured subsequent to their arrival through the Marka airport earlier Wednesday.

Prince Hassan instructed authorities to ensure that the injured receive all necessary care and treatment and he was assured as to the arrangements for their treatment, Petra stated.

The Crown Prince delegated the director of Irbid police department to convey condolences to the family of the late Mr. Shreideh, the agency reported.

'Women face uphill battle in JBA elections'

By Lola Keilani  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Two women who intend to run for the Jordan Bar Association council seat face an uphill task as the JBA does not differ from society's general attitude when women seek elected positions, political analysts say.

Mufedeh Sweidan, the first woman in Jordan to hold a Ph.D. in criminal law and Ghassoun Rahal, who has not yet registered, have expressed their interest in running in the 10-member council elections, scheduled to take place in March.

Analysts stress that the political setting of the 3,000 member association, 10 per cent of whom are women, makes it quite difficult for an independent lawyer to win a seat. They also believe that culpability mainly lies on female lawyers, who are reportedly unwilling to unanimously coordinate to elect a female colleague.

"Rather than concentrating on the possible advantages (which would follow) if a woman wins a seat in the council, female lawyers unfortunately, tend to concentrate more on personal differences," said one woman lawyer who requested anonymity.

According to these analysts, the only means by which a woman can win a seat on the JBA council is through nomination by a strong political movement at the JBA.

Historically, the association has two major competing trends — the Islamist umbrella and the currently dominant Arab nationalists and leftist grouping.

If a woman is to win a council seat, then she should be running under the auspices of either of these groups, lawyers say stressing that otherwise she has no chance.

Ms. Sweidan, who ran for the Irbid seat in the 1989 parliamentary elections, welcomed the nomination intent of Ms. Rahal and told the Jordan Times, that, although women are not discriminated against at the association, "nevertheless they should be represented at the decision-making level."

It is important, she said, to have more than one woman on the council.

Female lawyers, interviewed by the Jordan Times, divided themselves into two camps; those in favour of voting for a woman even if they disagree with her politics, and those who believe that their representative should be a convincing candidate regardless of gender.

"If each woman lawyer voted for woman candidate we would see a woman in the council very soon," said Attorney Fanan Sharif. She added that woman lawyers should give each other a chance to prove themselves.

Ghader Fayyaz agreed with Ms. Sharif and said that although she differed politically with a number of women who ran in previous elections she nevertheless voted for them. Both say they will vote for women candidates.

On the other hand, Attorneys Basma Nussur and Diya Bess said that although they believe it important to see female lawyers represented on the council, they were unwilling to vote for a woman candidate based on gender alone.

"I would like to be represented by a unionist, be it man or woman, but I will not vote on the basis of gender," Ms. Nussur said.

Ms. Bess concurred, "if all female lawyers at the association get their act together and nominate a woman with strong beliefs and personality, I would vote for her, otherwise there is no chance."

A total of 29 lawyers have heretofore formally registered to run for the 10 seat council. Nomination opened on Jan. 1 and will close on Feb. 20.



**Oasis Restaurant Bar**  
Great Entertainment for all  
Opening Saturday  
15th February 1997  
Members Only  
Applications for membership are invited



Las Vegas  
Cannery Islands Virgin Islands  
London Paris Geneva Madrid

What's Going On

PLAY  
\* "A Night of Fantasy" (Arabic) at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITION/SALE  
\* Bazaar and open house at Umm Al Qunduin, Airport Rd., exit to Arabian Horse Club, every Friday from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS  
\* Plastic art by Egyptian artist Mohammad Abdul Rahim at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Feb. 6.  
\* Ramadanist exhibition from Wadi Dana Nature Reserve (silver nature jewelry, jams, dried fruits) and Jordan River Designs (JRD) ornaments (tablecloths, candles, embroidered accessories) at JRD showroom, Jabal Amman, First Circle (Tel. 613081), until Feb. 10.  
\* Exhibition on the "Institute of the Arab World in Paris" at the French Cultural Centre, until Feb. 6.



# Taleban want talks, not fight with Shi'ite militia leader

KABUL (AFP) — The Taleban religious militia said Wednesday they would rather negotiate with opposition leader Abdul Karim Khalili than fight his Hezb-e-Wahdat Shi'ite party based in central Bamyan province.

"We will solve the problem of Bamyan without fighting insha-Allah (God willing)," Taleban spokesman and acting Minister of Information and Culture Amir Khan Muttaqi told AFP.

"We do not have any personal enmity with Khalili. We request him to help us in establishment of an Islamic government (throughout the country)," Mr. Muttaqi added.

The Taleban have advanced to the doorstep of Bamyan province following a lighting offensive.

"Evacuation of Bamyan is not necessary if Mr. Khalili agrees to the establishment of the Islamic government," he stressed.

A Khalili spokesman in Peshawar recently termed the Taleban religious militia "an undeniable reality which controls most parts of the country."

But Mr. Muttaqi denied a delegation from Mr. Khalili was already in Kabul.

Taleban forces, which moved into the Ghorband

Valley after hard fighting through the strategic Salang Valley over the past week, have taken the Sheikh Ali district, 140 kilometres northwest of Kabul and are now poised to attack Bamyan province.

Mr. Khalili has joined with ousted government forces, under the command of Ahmad Shah Masood, and troops loyal to northern warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum to form an opposition alliance against the Taleban.

The Taleban control the southern two-thirds of Afghanistan and began their push northwards with a spectacular siege and victory over Kabul at the end of September.

The easy advance by the Taleban through Ghorband, one of three mountainous routes to northern Afghanistan, has been helped by the defection to their side of a large number of local armed villagers, who claim they were mistreated by the opposition alliance.

The Taleban claimed over the weekend that residents of Behsoud and Tagab districts, in Wardak province, had revolted against Mr. Khalili and disarmed "tens of his men."

The two districts in Wardak, 35 kilometres west of Kabul, have been loyal to Mr. Khalili, whose Hezb-e-

Wahdat faction is made up of Shi'ite Muslim Afghans from the Hazara ethnic group.

The Taleban-controlled radio said the rebels in Wardak set fire to vehicles belonging to the fighters of Mr. Khalili.

Taleban fighters in Ghorband have said they intend to capture Bamyan before attacking General Dostum's northern fiefdom.

The Islamic militia, which captured Kabul in September, controls two thirds of Afghanistan. It has vowed to enforce a system based on Sharia law throughout the country.

Meanwhile, ten Afghans refugees die every day in camps in the western Afghan province of Herat, the United Nations said in a report released here Tuesday.

The report, which called for urgent food assistance, said an intensification of fighting between supporters of the Taleban militia and northern warlord Abdul Rashid Dostum in north-western Badghis province had resulted in new waves of refugees.

Severe cold, hunger and related diseases in the Herat camps killed an average of 10 people a day, four of them children, it said. At least 15 families add to the camps' population every

day, it added. It said both sides suffered heavy casualties in the fighting. The Taleban have reportedly been transporting their dead and wounded from the frontlines to eastern Jalalabad city.

In four refugee concentrations in Badghis, 11,000 displaced people are in "urgent need" of food, blankets, winter clothes and medicine, the report said.

The U.N. sources said 95,000 people had arrived in Kabul from northern Parwan and Kapisa provinces after the Taleban religious militia overran them last month.

The Taleban have ordered the ethnic Tajik inhabitants of three northern towns — Charikar, Jahul Seraj, Gulbahar — to abandon their homes so that the mainly Pashtun militia could feel secure against any uprising or guerrilla attacks behind their lines, local residents have said.

The move followed heavy casualties suffered by the Taleban in October when they were driven out of those areas amid a revolt by local people.

Though a majority of the refugees have been accommodated by their relatives in the capital, dozens more have been lodged in school buildings.



June, 1994 crime scene photograph of the body of murder victim Nicole Brown Simpson at the steps to her condominium in the Brentwood section of Los Angeles which was shown to jurors during the civil wrongful death lawsuit trial against defendant O.J. Simpson. The jury in O.J. Simpson's civil trial has found the former football star responsible for the deaths of Nicole Simpson and her friend Ronald Goldman, ordering Simpson to pay \$8.5 million in damages (Reuter photo)

## Jury blames Simpson for 2 killings

SANTA MONICA, California, (R) — Sixteen months after O.J. Simpson was cleared of murder charges, a civil trial jury blamed him Tuesday for the brutal killings of his ex-wife and her friend and ordered him to pay \$8.5 million in compensatory damages.

In the sequel to one of the most sensational murder trials of modern times, jurors unanimously found the ex-football star responsible for a deadly 1994 knife attack on Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman, and declared that he acted with "malice" and "oppression."

The mostly white panel deliberated for six days before deciding on a judgment against Simpson — effectively repudiating the not-guilty verdict a predominantly black jury returned in less than four hours in his 1995 criminal case.

Public reaction to the verdict was split once again along racial lines, but this time most whites supported the jury's decision while most blacks called it unjust — a reversal in the attitudes that prevailed after Simpson's acquittal.

Simpson, 49, will serve no jail time, but he could lose much of what is left of the multimillion-dollar fortune he earned in his days as a star running back, advertising pitchman and sportscaster.

Along with compensatory damages awarded to the victims' families, he could be slapped with millions more in punitive damages — designed to punish him for wrongdoing — in the next phase of the trial set to begin as early as Thursday.

While boisterous crowds massed outside the courtroom and police went on alert to head off possible unrest, Simpson sat stoic and stone-faced in a bushy courtroom as the verdict was read.

The victims' family members, who brought the wrongful-death case and refused to drop it even after Simpson was acquitted of criminal charges, shed tears of joy as they heard the jury's judgment.

Ron Goldman's sister, Kim, threw herself forward in her seat, shouting, "Oh my God." Cheers erupted in the courtroom, and judge Hiroshi Fujisaki warned spectators to keep silent or else they would be removed.

Simpson left the courtroom to a chorus of boos and shouts of "killer" from hundreds of people gathered outside, and police ringed the black Chevrolet Suburban car he was riding in.

President Bill Clinton, whose televised

state of the union address was almost overshadowed by the events in Santa Monica, urged Americans to respect the jury's judgment and called for racial unity. "It's time to move on and address the larger issues that confront America," Mr. Clinton said in a statement relayed by White House spokesman Mike McCurry.

A ban on cameras in the courtroom prevented millions from witnessing the decisive moment in the courtroom drama as they did when the verdict was read on Oct. 3, 1995, in Simpson's nationally televised criminal trial.

But from coast to coast Tuesday night, radio and television stations broadcast live from outside the Santa Monica courthouse.

In their judgment against Simpson, jurors slapped him with \$8.5 million in compensatory damages. Because Goldman's family members were the ones who filed a wrongful-death suit, the bulk of the money is payable to them as recompense for the loss of his love, companionship and moral support.

Nicole Brown Simpson's estate brought what is known as a "survivorship claim," which in the first round does not entitle it to compensatory damages.

However, the estate will share in any punitive damages, which jurors will decide based largely on how reprehensible the crime was. The judge told jurors to take Wednesday off to return to court on Thursday morning, when the punitive damages phase may get under way.

Whatever the amount, the victims' families will have a hard time collecting. Simpson's net worth, estimated at \$11 million four years ago, has been decimated by legal costs, and most of his remaining \$3 million is sunk into pension and retirement funds that are untouchable, according to a joint investigation by CNN and Time magazine.

Simpson's second trial did not amount to "double jeopardy" — which is prohibited by law — but rarely in the history of U.S. jurisprudence has a criminal defendant been acquitted only to be tried again on civil charges.

The panel of six men and six women consisted of nine whites, one Hispanic, one Asian-American and one member of mixed black and Asian descent — a near reversal from the racial composition of the jury that was picked in downtown Los Angeles to hear the criminal trial.

## U.K. parties clash over EU and jobs

LONDON (R) — Britain's two major political parties have clashed angrily over the European Union (EU), each charging the other of putting thousands of jobs at risk by their policies towards Brussels.

Prime Minister John Major claimed in a speech Tuesday that British dole queues could lengthen by 500,000 if the opposition Labour party won power at an imminent election and signed up to the EU's social chapter on workplace standards.

Labour's foreign affairs spokesman Robin Cook accused Mr. Major of a "betrayal of Britain's interests" in constantly giving in to demands by his party's so-called "Euro-sceptics."

Mr. Cook likened the Euro-sceptics to the militant tendency, a Trotskyist Group which infiltrated the Labour Party in the 1980s, and pushed its policies ever leftward, rendering it unelectable.

"But whereas the Labour Party turned on militant and

crushed them, John Major is running further and further away from his Eurosceptics," he told reporters ahead of a speech he is to deliver on Europe Wednesday.

The exchanges came with an election due within 3-1/2 months and opinion polls indicating Labour is poised to push the Conservatives out of power for the first time since 1979.

Mr. Cook said Mr. Major was concentrating on preserving party unity at the expense of advancing Britain's cause in Europe and promoting the good relations London needed with its EU partners.

"Our investments and our jobs depend on a successful relationship between Britain and the EU," Mr. Cook said.

In his speech to businessmen in Brussels, Mr. Major said making companies comply with scores of government regulations was adding to the unemployment registers in other EU states.

"Over-regulation doesn't work, and as a result nor do millions of Europeans," he said.

He contrasted Britain's success in creating over 900,000 new jobs in recent years with stubbornly high jobless figures in countries like Spain and France, and warned of dire consequences if Britain signed up for the social chapter as Labour promises.

"One signature on the social chapter would mean half a million signatures on the dole... It would become a Trojan horse unloading on Britain the problems which brought us to a low point in the 1970s," he said.

The charge prompted Mr. Cook to release extracts of Wednesday's speech in advance. In them, he accuses Mr. Major of a "grotesque caricature" which "demeans both the level of political debate and the standing of his office."

He challenges Mr. Major to say how he arrived at the "suspiciously round" figure of 500,000 job losses.

## Clinton starts crusade to improve schools

WASHINGTON (R) — President Bill Clinton opens his national crusade to raise the level of U.S. education Wednesday with a day-trip to Augusta, Georgia, where he will promote a plan to encourage more Americans to go to college.

The plan is modelled on a Georgia programme that uses state lottery money to finance college scholarships. Mr. Clinton, hoping to make 14 years of schooling the national norm instead of the current 12, would offset tuition with a \$1,500 tax credit for two years, which would pay for most community colleges.

In his state of the union speech on Tuesday night, Mr. Clinton called education "one of the critical national security issues for our future" and vowed to lead a "national crusade" to make U.S. schools the envy of the world.

As he described a rosy picture of a country enjoying a strong economy, with crime and welfare rolls down in a speech that ran one hour, much of the nation's attention was riveted on Santa Monica, California, where a jury was about to deliver its verdict on the civil trial of O.J. Simpson.

The White House feared — unnecessarily, as it happened — that the television networks would preempt the speech for the verdict that Mr. Simpson was liable for the deaths of ex-wife Nicole and her friend Ron Goldman, both hacked to death in 1994.

"The president felt that there was a very good atmosphere of bipartisanship in the hall," White House spokesman Mike McCurry told reporters after the speech. "He's very confident that as he works with Congress ... that we'll be able to start working on the agenda he outlined tonight."

Mr. Clinton, who began his second term on Jan. 20, said his main goals over the next four years were to improve education, balance the budget and reform campaign financing.

"We face no imminent threat, but we do have an enemy: The enemy of our time is inaction," Mr. Clinton told the joint Houses of Congress in the ornate house of representatives chamber and millions watching on television. "So tonight, I issue a call to action ... to prepare America for the 21st century."

The need to strengthen U.S. education has been a subject of intense discussion since Ronald Reagan's presidency in the 1980s, when a national commission found a "rising tide of mediocrity" in American schools, and warned that the country faced inevitable decline if the situation were not reversed.

"We must understand the significance of this endeavour: one of the greatest sources of our strength throughout the cold war was a bipartisan foreign policy because our future was at stake, politics stopped at the water's edge," Mr. Clinton said.

"Now I ask you — I ask all our nation's governors, and I ask teachers, parents and citizens all across America, for a new non-partisan commitment to education," he added.

Mr. Clinton proposed \$51 billion for education in the fiscal year starting Oct. 1, a 20 per cent increase over current spending, to pay for education, training and tax cuts tied to education that are to be outlined in his budget blueprint to be sent to Capitol Hill for consideration Thursday.

Under Mr. Clinton's programme, spending would rise to nearly \$60 billion a year by 2002 even as other programmes are cut to balance the federal budget by that year.

## U.S. says Albright origins won't change her views

WASHINGTON (R) — The Clinton administration said Tuesday that the discovery that Secretary of State Madeleine Albright appears to be of Jewish ancestry in no way complicated her ability to encourage peace in the Middle East.

White House spokesman Mike McCurry told reporters Mrs. Albright herself briefed President Bill Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore on the matter Monday.

"The president said it was a fascinating story and encouraged Madeleine to find out more, to look into her family history," Mr. McCurry said. "He thought it was fascinating."

State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said that, based on newly available information, the Czech-born Albright believed it was "more than likely" her grandparents were Jewish and three of them died in the Holocaust.

The Washington Post recently researched Mrs. Albright's background and reported Tuesday that more than a dozen of her relatives, including three grandparents, were killed as Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

At the State Department, Mr. Burns told a news briefing the discovery "in no way, shape or form will

have any impact whatsoever on her performance or her outlook as secretary of state."

"I think that we can trust that leaders around the world, particularly those in the Middle East, will be sophisticated enough to understand who she is, and who she works for," he said. "I don't anticipate this being an issue whatsoever."

Mr. Burns insisted that Mrs. Albright "didn't know anything about this" until last week when questioned by the Washington Post.

He said the Post had given Mrs. Albright the results of its research and "she intends to follow this up."

He said that since Mrs. Albright was nominated in December to be secretary of state she had received a great deal of mail from Eastern Europe, some of which referred to the fact that her family might have Jewish roots.

"A lot of this mail referred to stories about her father or her which were clearly inaccurate. And so she didn't pay much attention to it," he said. "Frankly, so much came in at a very busy time that she didn't

look."

Mrs. Albright was two years old when her parents left Czechoslovakia in 1939, less than two weeks after the Nazi occupation. The family eventually came to the United States.

Meanwhile, a Saudi newspaper said Wednesday The "Zionist octopus" leaked reports that U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has Jewish origins in a bid to pressure Washington into bolstering Israel.

"The Washington Post article which revealed that Mrs. Albright is not Christian but Jewish constitutes indirect Zionist blackmail" against the Americans so they adopt a pro-Israel stand, Al Madina newspaper said.

Riyadh, which has tight control over its media, allows its newspapers to launch frequent attacks against Israel and Jews.

"The Zionist octopus which is blackmailing Switzerland currently" over Jewish funds stolen by the Nazis in World War II "is the same as the one which is trying to seize Arab rights," the daily added.

## 9 more people massacred in Algeria — paper

ALGIERS (AFP) — Nine people from the same family were massacred earlier this week in a mountain village near Medea, south of Algiers, the daily Al Watan newspaper reported Wednesday.

It said the victims, including women and children, had their throats slit in a raid by a commando unit of about 20 men overnight on Monday in the village of Benichou.

The paper did not provide any other information on the killings, which come amid a wave of similar massacres since the start of the Holy Month of Ramadan on Jan. 10.

The killings have been blamed on militants vying to topple the military-backed government.

The extremists have killed almost 300 people in the last month, according to accounts of the violence, mainly by the local media.

Last Saturday 31 people were decapitated near Kiten, located in a mountainous region where the extremists are heavily active.

Another killing that stunned the country and the international community was that of Abdul Haq Ben Hamouda, a highly-respected trade union leader who

was gunned down in the capital on Jan. 28. The government has generally chosen not to publicise the violence which has claimed more than 50,000 lives since the extremist launched their campaign in January 1992, after the cancellation of general elections that the now outlawed Islamic Salvation Front was poised to win.

lists' nominee for Prime Minister Nikolai Dobrev as telling the party Tuesday he would not form a government because ignoring the protests would lead to bloodshed.

"I know you will think me a traitor but I will not have my hands dipped in blood," Kontinent daily quoted him as saying.

The Bulgarian lev recovered to 2,400-2,600 to the dollar on the Interbank Market from lows of 3,000-3,100 Tuesday. The currency has been in freefall since the beginning of the year and many exchange bureaus have run out of lev.

The Central Bank said Tuesday its foreign exchange reserves had fallen to \$415 million at end-January from \$955.6 million a year earlier.

Papers quoted the Socialist Party leader Georgi Parvanov warning Tuesday such a government would have no control over organised crime.

"In the absence of all necessary laws, of an effective parliament and a working government, in the next few months Bulgaria will be a gangsters' paradise," he said.

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"I am not buying bread only for my family but for my neighbours too, as they work during the day," said pensioner Nikola Peev, struggling to carry 11 loaves of bread.

## Bulgarians celebrate, newspapers acclaim victory

SOFIA (R) — Bulgarians celebrated into the early hours of Wednesday after their ex-Communist rulers agreed to elections in April, and newspapers acclaimed a victory for the people who turned out for 30 days of mass protests.

"Nation triumphs. Socialists decline mandate" said Standard daily, which had "victory" printed across each page in opposition blue, in place of Tuesday's "strike."

Jubilant Bulgarians turned roadblocks into street parties Tuesday night, dancing, singing and waving opposition flags in defiance of sub-zero temperatures.

The main opposition Union of Democratic Forces (UDF) invited its supporters to a final victory rally in Sofia Wednesday evening.

President Petar Stoyanov, who mediated the agree-

ment, warned Tuesday the political settlement would not ease the country's severe economic crisis.

"After the night of celebration, early in the morning when a man is hungry, he may ask the following questions: What will happen from now on? When will the shops open? What can we find in them? And from where will we get money to buy it?" said a commentary in Troud daily.

Despite the euphoria, one central Sofia bread shop had a queue of about 100 people outside from early morning and a saleswoman said people were buying up to 10 loaves each.

"I am not buying bread only for my family but for my neighbours too, as they work during the day," said pensioner Nikola Peev, struggling to carry 11 loaves of bread.

"I hope that now the political deadlock has been cut, the new government to come will investigate the reasons and sue the officials responsible for the bread crisis," said Boriana Tsolova.

Under the constitution, Mr. Stoyanov must appoint a caretaker government whose main task will be to organise the elections. Parliament will be dissolved once it has cleared outstanding business.

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A Colombian army helicopter with leftist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) soldiers as wounded or missing (Reuter photo)

## 16 soldiers

SAN JUAN, Colombia (R) — The Colombian government said Tuesday that 16 soldiers and as many as 150 guerrillas were killed in a fierce four-day battle in a mountainous area near the capital city.

The fighting, in which the government army and 15 to 20 FARC guerrillas fought, began on Sunday. Armed forces of the Colombian army were killed, began Tuesday when about 100 soldiers were airlifted to the area to prevent a FARC attack on a small band of guerrillas.

The battle was the worst and longest to erupt near Bogotá, a recent memory as rebels fought out to be from the city. FARC rebels made their way since left with a large number of the army's capital.

Prime Minister Emilio Bartholomew, who was in the army's custody, said "deeply" in a radio interview.

## S. Koreans

SEOUL (R) — South Korea's navy said Wednesday that it had sunk a North Korean cargo ship, the Taesong, in the Yellow Sea. The ship was carrying a large amount of military equipment and was heading towards North Korea.

When it was said about 200 soldiers and 400 tons of military equipment were on board, several kilometers towards Taiwan, flying planes and missiles from both Taiwan and North Korea to what they called a "joint military peace and security" in North East Asia.

Under a contract signed by South Korea's President Kim Dae-jung and North Korean leader Kim Jong-il on Jan. 11, Taiwan is to ship up to 200,000 barrels of nuclear waste to South Korea.

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## Zairean rebels

KINSHASA (R) — Zairean rebels leader Laurent Kabila Wednesday gave President Mobutu Sese Seko Konde Ilunga II his ultimatum to end a major rebel attack.

"I hope Mobutu can come to the table and agree to a negotiated settlement. We shall have no choice but to launch a major offensive," he told Reuters in the rebel-held city of Goma.

Mr. Kabila, who accused Mobutu and his government of corruption and human rights abuses, had already been killed in clashes with his forces.

"France and Belgium are returning and paying for the mercenaries, but they will be defeated because the population is on our side," he said.

The Zairean government, which has been in power since 1965, is now being challenged by a coalition of rebel forces. The rebels have been fighting for several months, and have captured several key cities in the north of the country.



## Clinton starts crusade to improve schools

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton opened his national education tour Tuesday with a day trip to Appalachia, where he will announce a plan to encourage Americans to go to college.

The plan is modeled after a Georgia program that uses state lottery money to fund college scholarships. Mr. Clinton hopes to make 14 years of college the national norm.

Clinton, who would not set foot on the ground until Tuesday, said he would like to see \$1,500 tax credit for years, which would be most community colleges.

In his state of the speech on Tuesday, Mr. Clinton called on the national security and education, and urged a "national crusade" to make U.S. schools the best in the world.

Clinton described a picture of a country with a strong economy, crime and welfare, and a speech by one of the nation's top education officials. Clinton said he was "not just talking about the future, but about the future of the future."

The White House said Clinton's tour is a "crusade" to improve schools. Clinton said he was "not just talking about the future, but about the future of the future."

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A Colombian army helicopter lands near San Juanito, some 120 kilometres east of Bogota, Tuesday. The fighting with leftist Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) have so far left at least 19 dead soldiers and dozens listed as wounded or missing. Army sources said that up to 1,000 troops were set to be ferried into the combat zone (Renter photo).

## 16 soldiers die in heavy fighting near Bogota

SAN JUANITO, Colombia (R) — The Colombian government said Tuesday that 16 soldiers and as many as 15 leftist guerrillas were killed in a fierce four-day battle in a mountainous area near the capital city.

The fighting, in which the defence ministry said 13 to 15 Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebels were killed, began late Friday when about 50 soldiers were airlifted into the area in pursuit of what was initially thought to be a small band of insurgents.

The battle was the worst and longest to erupt near Bogota in recent memory as what turned out to be hundreds of FARC rebels made their presence felt with a bang on the doorstep of the nation's capital.

Defence Minister Guillermo Alberto Gonzalez, who announced the army casualty figure with "deep regret" in a national radio interview,

denied reports that dozens of soldiers were missing or unaccounted for in the rugged combat area around this mountain town just 50 kilometres east of the capital.

"There are no missing soldiers," Mr. Gonzalez said. He said 21 soldiers were stranded in the early stages of the firefight. But he said all had been plucked by safety by their fellow troops and most were rescued unharmed.

Army chief General Manuel Jose Bonett told foreign journalists last week that Bogota was among the strategic targets of the FARC and National Liberation Army, Colombia's second-largest guerrilla group.

Earlier Tuesday Colombia's army said it was pouring hundreds of reinforcements into the mountainous area.

Army sources in Villavieja, capital of Meta province, told Reuters up to 1,000 troops were set to be ferried into the combat

zone.

Military sources also confirmed that intense aerial bombardments of the area had been under way since Sunday in a bid to crush the rebels.

The latest bombardments came just after dawn Tuesday and lasted nearly 90 minutes. Later in the day helicopter gunships buzzed an outlying settlement and strafed hillsides.

One chopper later touched down in an area known as El Tablon and picked up at least three bodies of dead soldiers, witnesses said. No further gunfire was heard from mid-afternoon but an army officer said combat could restart at any moment.

"I'm sure the FARC hasn't got away. We have the exit routes out of the area blocked, they're just lying low," he said.

At least 400 people have fled to San Juanito from outlying villages since late on Friday, pouring into the

## Bhutto election meltdown leaves Sharif in command

ISLAMABAD (AFP) — Nawaz Sharif's sweeping triumph in Pakistan's elections has virtually eliminated arch-rival Benazir Bhutto's party as a major political contender both nationwide and in key provincial governments.

Mr. Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League (PML) trounced ousted Premier Bhutto's Pakistan People's Party (PPP) in both federal and provincial elections held concurrently Monday, taking control of Punjab with the largest single party majority in the country's history, analysts said.

His party amassed 211 seats in the 240-member Punjab Provincial Assembly against only two seats won by the PPP, which has considered Punjab a key stronghold since the party was started by Ms. Bhutto's father, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, about three decades ago.

"This time Punjab has voted with one voice and said 'no' to Benazir Bhutto and the PPP," The News daily said in an editorial Wednesday.

In the 217-member feder-

al parliament, the PML increased its holdings to 134 seats, against a mere 18 held by the PPP, with the balance going to other minor parties and independents.

The previous National Assembly, which was dissolved last November by President Farooq Leghari amid charges of corruption and misrule against Ms. Bhutto, was run by the PPP with 86 seats against 68 seats held by Mr. Sharif's party.

However, Ms. Bhutto managed to keep control over her home province of Sindh, keeping her own seat in parliament, with PPP candidates haggling 36 seats in the 100-member provincial assembly.

Ms. Bhutto claimed that the elections were rigged — "I have been cheated, not defeated" — but said she would cooperate with Mr. Sharif for the good of the nation.

Mr. Sharif himself admitted that the results were far better than he had dreamed of.

The PML made surprise

inroads in Sindh with 15 seats, while the ethnic-based Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM) secured 28 seats. Independents took 15 seats, while another PPP faction, controlled by her slain brother Murtaza Bhutto's widow Ghinwa, won two seats.

With a large number of seats going to independents, analysts said Mr. Sharif could form a strong alliance in Ms. Bhutto's traditional Sindh stronghold.

The results in the key provinces show the "politics of horse-trading has been buried," said analyst Sajja Mahmood, adding that previous assemblies had been paralysed by near equal representation by the major parties and their allies.

The North West Frontier province, bordering Afghanistan, went to Mr. Sharif's party which won 31 seats in the 80-member assembly. A traditional PML ally, the centre-left Awami National Party (ANP), took 28 seats, with Ms. Bhutto's party trailing with a meager four seats.

The situation in the south-

western province of Baluchistan, bordering Iran, was complicated with neither of the two main parties making any significant gains.

Former Chief Minister Atallah Mengal's newly-formed Baluchistan National Party (BNP), a former ally of the ANP, took the largest stake with nine seats in the 40-member assembly. The PML won five seats against one seat going to the PPP.

Regional and nationalist parties shared 16 seats while the fundamentalist Jamiat Ulema Islam Party of Fazlur Rehman bagged six and the balance went to independents.

Analysts said the PML was likely to form a coalition with the BNP, fringe parties and independents in Baluchistan.

Turnout for the elections was the lowest since 1988 with some 35 per cent of 56.5 million registered voters casting ballots. Officials cited the fasting month of Ramadan and cold weather as reasons for the low attendance.

## OSCE mission chief forced to quit Chechnya

GROZNY (AFP) — The head of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission in Grozny, Tim Guldemann, was ordered out of Chechnya Tuesday after riling the separatist-led government by saying the war-torn republic was still a part of Russia.

Mr. Guldemann "was declared persona non grata, he was forced to leave Chechen territory," Interfax News Agency reported, quoting an unidentified spokesman for the OSCE.

A source at the OSCE office in Grozny, contacted by AFP from Moscow, confirmed later Tuesday that Mr. Guldemann, a Danish national, had left the republic as instructed.

"He now is in Nazran," capital of the neighbouring Russian Republic of Ingushetia, the source said. It was expected that he would proceed to Moscow Wednesday.

The Western mediator was summoned to the Chechen Foreign Ministry where he was told by Foreign Minister Ruslan Chimayev that his presence was no longer wanted, the OSCE spokesman said.

"We consider as unacceptable the presence of this representative of an international organisation in Chechnya," Mr. Chimayev explained later Tuesday in a statement.

Mr. Chimayev's move came after Mr. Guldemann told a press conference last Thursday that, despite recent polls in the small but strategic Caucasus republic, the international community still saw Chechnya as a part of Russia.

The OSCE monitored the Jan. 27 elections in Chechnya, in which former rebel Chechen Commander Aslan Maskhadov was elected president with 59.32 per cent of votes.

"Guldemann's comments contradict existing agreements between Russia and Chechnya," Mr. Chimayev said Tuesday.

Under an August 1996 peace treaty that ended the Chechens' 21-month war of independence with Russia, the two sides gave themselves five years to work out their "mutual relations" and a statute for Chechnya.

While Moscow considers the vote an internal election for local officials, Chechen separatists see it as a de facto confirmation of an independence they believe they won in their war against Russia.

## Sri Lanka troops take Tamil rebel territory in major push

COLOMBO (AFP) — Thousands of soldiers backed by tanks and air cover advanced into territory held by Tamil Tiger guerrillas in northern Sri Lanka Wednesday on the second day of a major offensive.

Air force jets bombed suspected positions of the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in the northern Wanni region of the country as well as in the nearby town of Mullaitivu, officials said.

Thousands of ground troops mounted operation Edi Bala Tuesday as the country marked the 49th anniversary of independence from Britain with pledges to end decades of ethnic bloodshed.

The military push began from the de facto frontier post in the northern district of Vavuniya and was moving westwards towards a remote military base on the north-western coast of Mannar, the sources said.

The Mannar military facilities are currently supplied only by sea and air.

Dozens of armoured cars, tanks, bulldozers and ambulances had been moved to Vavuniya in the past few days to prepare for the latest military push seen by analysts as the biggest this year.

The offensive was expected for some time as part of the government's objective of opening a land route to the island's northern Jaffna peninsula which was taken

from the rebels earlier last year.

Military analysts said it was difficult to imagine that the army will go all the way to secure the entire 70 kilometre stretch of road through jungles but rather would do it in stages and may also make some detours.

Meanwhile, Tamil travellers crossing rebel lines and arriving at Vavuniya told local reporters that the LTTE had dismantled its political offices along the main road between Vavuniya and Jaffna.

The Defence Ministry here declined to comment on the latest military action.

The Tiger guerrillas mounted a major attack against two army camps just south of the Jaffna peninsula earlier last month, killing 223 government soldiers for the loss of at least 142 of their men.

The Jan. 9 Tiger simultaneous attacks on the Parathan and Elephant Pass camps were seen as a move to hunt the planned drive to secure a land route to Jaffna, the former Tiger bastion, analysts said.

## Milosevic makes concessions to opposition; protests to continue

BELGRADE (R) — Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic has made his first concessions to three months of pro-democracy demonstrations, prompting a cautious welcome from foreign and domestic critics alike.

Mr. Milosevic, an austere, autocratic figure, said Tuesday he had written to his prime minister asking parliament to reinstate the disputed results of November's local elections with special legislation.

Washington said it welcomed the move "as a first step in the right direction in Serbia," while Mr. Milosevic's domestic foes vowed to keep up protests until all demands were met.

Mr. Milosevic acted two days after ordering his security police to break up demonstrations, leaving scores of people injured in the worst violence seen in Belgrade for several years.

His political opponents, united in a three-party coalition, want their local election victories in 14 cities and towns, including Belgrade, reinstated. They demand free media, and the prosecution of those responsible for police violence.

"In keeping with its constitutional competence, I propose that the Serbian government submit to parliament a draft emergency law which will proclaim as

final results of a part of local elections in Serbia in keeping with the findings of the OSCE (factfinding) mission," Mr. Milosevic said in his letter to the prime minister. The "part" referred to those results annulled by the Socialist authorities.

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) had endorsed the opposition claim to election wins.

Within hours, Prime Minister Mirko Marjanovic told state radio and television that a draft law reinstating the disputed results would probably be submitted to parliament Wednesday.

But some experts questioned the legality of Mr. Milosevic's move, calling it a face-saving attempt to show the world he was merciful rather than acknowledge grievances of the opposition.

"It's unconstitutional. The president of the republic can only appeal, primarily to courts...to have them establish the truth about the election results and not send recommendations to the government and parliament to arbitrate and rule on election disputes," said Serbian Constitutional Court Judge Slobodan Vucetic.

"This is obviously just an attempt to use a 'political act of goodwill by the re-

leader' to create a semblance of readiness by the authorities to resolve the election dispute in system institutions and hide the obvious truth that the current authorities alone are responsible for the election fraud and deep political crisis," he told reporters.

Drago Hiber, head of the opposition's Legal Committee, said he expected further wrangling over the findings of the OSCE mission and "what this special law should recognise."

However, Serbian legality is subject to influence from the ruling Socialist Party (SPS), so Mr. Milosevic may have calculated that a legal basis for his manoeuvre could be worked out.

Diplomats said Mr. Milosevic's gesture to the pro-democracy movement was not a complete surprise. The question was why it took 77 days of street demonstrations.

Authoritative political sources said he was using that time preparing for a showdown with hardliners in his party.

"Milosevic's concession is more a result of the moderates prevailing over the hardliners (in the SPS)," one source said.

## Zairean rebel leader gives Mobutu an ultimatum

GOMA, Zaire (R) — Zairean rebel leader Laurent Kabila Wednesday gave President Mobutu Sese Seko until Feb. 21 to surrender power or face a major rebel attack.

"Unless Mobutu can come to the table and agree to relinquish power we shall have no choice but to launch a major offensive," he told Reuters in the rebel-held city of Goma.

Mr. Kabila also accused France and Belgium of recruiting 300 foreign mercenaries. He said seven of the mercenaries had already been killed in clashes with his forces.

"France and Belgium are recruiting and paying for the mercenaries but they will be defeated because the population is on our side," he said.

The Zairean government admits it has hired foreign mercenaries, many of whom are from former Yugoslavia, but France and Belgium deny they are the paymasters.

The Tutsi-led rebels launched their campaign in October, accusing the Zairean authorities of denying them citizenship and seek-

ing to return them to Rwanda, which their forebears left generations ago.

The army began a counter-offensive on Jan. 20, but it has failed to dislodge the rebels from towns and territory along the borders with Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi.

Mr. Kabila said Wednesday in this eastern rebel stronghold that his forces were making progress on all fronts in their fight against the government.

He said his troops were continuing their advance in the rich mining province of Shaba in the south and were about 40 kilometres from the town of Moba, located along Lake Tanganyika.

On the western front, they were less than 19 kilometres from Lubutu, west of Goma, and 33 kilometres west of Bukavu.

Mr. Kabila said it was only "a matter of hours" before the northeast town of Isiro was captured.

The United States, which has urged other nations to stay out of the fighting in eastern Zaire, confirmed foreign troops were crossing into Zaire to help the

sides.

"We have ample evidence" that foreign troops have crossed into Zaire, State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said in Washington Tuesday.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni during a meeting here that the United States wants to preserve the territorial integrity of Zaire," Mr. Burns said.

The State Department would not say which countries may be supplying troops to rebel forces in eastern Zaire or to Kinshasa.

Meanwhile, a Zairean official accompanying President Mobutu on a visit to Morocco said Tuesday Zaire will not negotiate "in any way" with the rebels.

Luhmana Kapasa, head of the Zairean Presidential Press Service, declared: "There is no question of having a dialogue with the rebels for the simple reason that these people are puppets manipulated by Rwanda and Uganda."

"You don't hold dialogue with a traitor," he added,

referring to Mr. Kabila.

"War remains the only solution to ending the rebellion and the position of the Zairean government has not changed one iota on this subject," he said.

Mr. Kapasa said the problem of refugees who started last autumn to "invade" Zaire was used as "a pretext by certain countries in the region to occupy militarily the provinces of east Zaire."

The spokesman criticised the international community which, he said, "has not up to now reacted appropriately" to the region's problems.



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## Step towards future

PRIME MINISTER Abdul Karim Kabariti's government celebrated the anniversary of its first year in office a couple of days ago. While one year is not a sufficient period of time in which success or failure of any government can be measured, it is nevertheless appropriate to use the anniversary as a yardstick in passing judgement on the performance of the Kabariti team. But to take full stock of how the government has fared is no easy task, given the fact that this is Mr. Kabariti's first experience as prime minister, and secondly because he and his team had inherited political and economic legacies which were difficult to deal with, to put it mildly. On the external political front, the country has experienced a rapid warming of relations with the Arab World, notably Saudi Arabia. Even though the restoration of Jordanian-Gulf relations to normality had in fact been set in motion prior to Mr. Kabariti's assumption of office, there is no doubt that important progress was registered in 1996 towards this goal. Throughout the Arab World, Jordan has also been successful in forging new beginnings based on candid views and constructive efforts. The same could be said about our relations with the U.S., Europe, Japan and the rest of the international community.

Where most Jordanians felt the government's impact, however, was on the home front. This is where Mr. Kabariti has tried to leave his deepest mark by earnestly attempting to put the Jordanian house in order. The economy continued to prosper and grow at a 5-6 per cent rate annually. New laws have been introduced or are in the pipeline in a concerted effort to modernise legislation on taxation, customs, elections and the press. But there is much unfinished business which would be the real test of the government's success or failure.

The much talked about modern election law has yet to be completed even though the necessary one-person, one-vote has been adopted by the Parliament. The Press and Publications Law also awaits revamping to make it more democratic. The much heralded Centre for Democracy and Freedoms, which the King proposed more than three years ago, is a stillborn creature. Moreover, in the absence of a dynamic constitutional court, the Jordanian organic law will continue to be marginalised. The educational system is well overdue for an effective overhaul, and poverty and unemployment are still major socio-economic problems that await rectification.

We can continue mentioning the huge work that lies ahead as we chronicle the achievements already made. The main issue, though, is neither the pluses nor the minuses of the Kabariti government's record in these domains. Rather, it is the style of governing that this team is pursuing: Is it going to be a government of genuine dialogue with the people? Are we going to have more participatory democracy which Mr. Kabariti himself has talked about at length in recent times? Are we going to forge a united Jordan where citizenship and national identity are established by law and a contemporary criteria?

National cohesion is emerging as the number one issue facing the country. We either cultivate national unity by word and deed or risk all by plunging the country and its people into a divisive debate.

We need to debate in a democratic and objective manner, every and all issues facing us. But we also need to be clear on where we are heading. Neither this nor any other government can tell what the future holds in store for us, it is true. In this part of the world, change can be as unpredictable as our winter weather forecast. Where this government could and should be most useful, however, is in clarity of vision and of purpose.

Many citizens, unfortunately, still do not know whether they should be the instruments of progress in their society or themselves have to be the subject of change. Perhaps this government can help us define the direction towards a better future.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THANKS TO the Likud government's policies, there is no chance for normalisation of relations between the Jewish state and the Arab World, said Fahed Fanek, a writer for Al Ra'i Wednesday. The Likud government has proved to be hostile to the idea of normalising relations and launching economic links with the Arab World and that is why it has recently decided to freeze the idea of building an airport in Aqaba, in conjunction with Jordan, and is shelving plans for linking the Dead Sea with the Red Sea and carry out projects in the Jordan rift valley or build railways in cooperation with the Kingdom, he said. The writer said that Israel's decision to cancel plans for establishing a liquefied gas plant in Aqaba, from which Israel would draw 75 per cent of the Qatari-supplied gas, as was originally planned, reflects this Israeli policy. Of course, he said, Israel prefers to buy gas from Egypt, which offers competitive prices for the gas, and this gave the Jewish state the motive that prompted it to cancel plans for the plant in Aqaba, he added. But on the whole, the Likud government's behaviour on other fronts clearly reflects Israel's lack of confidence in its future relations with the Arabs who have realised the Jewish state's evil intentions and objectives in the Arab World.

## The View from Academia

## Class size and class management

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

LARGE CLASSES, whether at public schools or public universities, have become a fact of life in our part of the world. Over the past three decades we have experienced some sporadic periods of Indian summer where the number of students in our classes was acceptable, i.e., in the neighbourhood of 30. Most of the time, however, our classes averaged 40-50 students, which is quite large by many standards. Today, most of our classes are still quite large.

Ideally, we should do all in our power to reduce the number, for large classes do pose a problem and a challenge. Ultimately, students will not benefit the way they do when classes are smaller. They have the chance to express themselves less, to get less involved in discussions, to ask fewer questions, to daydream more, to "hide," in take it easy and to be passive.

The acceptable class size, in my opinion, is one of about 20-30 students. Less than 20, in addition to being a bit too unrealistic a goal to pursue, poses the problem of exposing the students to too much pressure (to participate, ask questions, express opinions, etc.) and makes the class environment less comfortable and relaxing for them. One could in fact argue, unlike what I may sound in theory, that in practice small classes are as problematic as large classes.

However, as things stand at this point, large classes will be with us for quite some time. Due to population increase, to scarcity of funds, space and facilities, and to pressure from the community at large to accept more students, our classes will continue to be large for a while.

What should we do?

Well, the responsibility falls primarily on the teacher's shoulder, for it is ultimately the teachers who have to face the situation and attempt to make the best of it.

Before we talk about what should be done, we must emphasise what should not be done. Large classes should not be used as an excuse by teachers to practise traditional or bad methods of conducting classes. Most teachers tell you that the number of students is too large for effective class interaction. What can you do in 40 or 50 minutes with 40 or 50 students, they ask. Hence they resort to the old-fashioned, harmful method of lecturing or dictating information to students.

I am indeed surprised to find teachers at our schools and universities who still lecture or dictate to students. This is inexcusable. A change of attitude on the part of the teacher is necessary before a change in the way the class is conducted is possible. In answer to the question above, therefore, one could say that a lot can be done with 40 or 50 students in 40 or 50 minutes if the teachers think positively and stop viewing large classes as being a hopeless situation.

Let's remember, first of all, that class time is quite ample if used efficiently and effectively. Abused and misused, it may not be sufficient. A student can say a lot in one minute. I would say that in lively classes, each student does not normally need more than half a minute to make an intelligent comment about a certain point or ask an intelligent question. Good class management has a lot to do with time management and time economics. Time is valuable and should not be wasted. Part of education is to train students (as well as teachers) to be as direct and pre-

cise as possible when they make a point. If time, in other words, is managed well, and if teachers and students do not ramble, are not redundant and repetitive when they express themselves, a great deal can happen in 40 or 50 minutes.

The second point to emphasise here is approach. Lecturing or dictating is out of the question. The key word in successful classes, be they large or small, is I would say, "discussion." In any class, of any type, students study a certain text: literary, scientific, sociological, etc. The way to approach the text is to ask the students to prepare it beforehand and then to go about discussing it paragraph by paragraph.

One excellent way to begin the discussion is to ask a student to present an idea from the text, or to comment after having read it, to the class in no more than 3-5 minutes. This will serve the double function of having students involved and of training them to express themselves economically, directly and effectively. Presenters should come to class fully prepared. Comments from the student body on the student's presentation should then be solicited, for no more than five minutes. If we follow the rule of half a minute for each student, then we are allowing ten students to speak in five minutes.

The rest of the class can be conducted by a question and answer method, with the teacher commenting briefly and asking provocative questions and then students making brief, to-the-point comments and clear, straightforward answers.

With time management and through discussions, we can make large classes work. This can be done.

## No peace without justice, which is more than democracy

By Julius K. Nyerere

NEW YORK — Peace is a product of justice; it is not simply the absence of violence. All violent conditions represent earlier failures of leadership, either by wrongdoing or by default. They represent failures at local levels, and especially at national levels.

With the interdependence associated with modern technology, they can also mean failures at international levels.

It is much easier to prevent than to end wars and revolts.

In Africa today, and especially in Rwanda and Burundi, we hear a great deal about ethnic conflicts. Yet these are taking place at particular times and places after members of the different ethnic groups have for long periods lived side by side in the same villages and towns, have worked together and have intermarried. Thus, ethnicity is clearly not a sufficient explanation of conflict.

Ethnicity can, however, be used to conceal the real problems, the genuine economic problems or cultural clashes, behind the easily aroused human fears about those who are unlike ourselves.

Ethnicity can also be used to divide and rule. In Rwanda and Burundi, this use of ethnicity was clearly made by Germany

and Belgium as colonial powers.

Ethnic conflict will arise when leaders in the society deliberately strengthen the concept of ethnicity, and for their own purposes ignite hostility. In Rwanda and Burundi, conflict has economic roots. The fight for power is mainly a fight for economic resources. Ethnicity is simply being exploited.

Conflicts of interest or desire within a social or political group are inevitable; they are an intrinsic part of living in society. And some level of conflict between nations is also quite normal. Our duty is to prevent 'normal' conflict of interest from developing into hostility.

We need to defuse potential conflict, and deliberately build peaceful relationships through the extension of justice throughout the society.

This duty, to say the least, is not always easy to fulfil. In poor countries it is especially difficult. The introduction of political democracy can help, but it is not enough; indeed, it can aggravate civil conflict. When the political system gives the vote to the many, and the economic system gives bread to the few, civil strife is almost inevitable.

When the vote is a human

right and bread is a privilege of the few, democracy is a mockery. It cannot be an instrument of peace and harmony because it is not an instrument of justice.

*"When the vote is a human right and bread is a privilege of the few, democracy is a mockery. It cannot be an instrument of peace and harmony because it is not an instrument of justice."*

The surest way to build and to maintain peace within and between nations is to work for justice — justice for all persons and all groups.

A nation and a world organised as a basis of upholding the principle of human equality, human dignity, justice and respect for all will be a nation and a world where peace prevails.

We are not there yet anywhere in the world, and certainly not in my part of the

world. And I am not sure that the relentless weakening of government and community, and the equally relentless globalisation and marketisation of our economies, will prove to be particularly conducive to the building of peace through justice.

Where the law of the jungle reigns supreme, where might is right, where the game of money-making includes arms trafficking and corruption — what is justice? And what is peace?

When governments are weak or corrupt or both, who can intervene on behalf of the weak in our poor societies?

People have instincts of cooperation as well as of self-interest. If societies are so organised as to encourage human cooperation and mutual tolerance of differences, then building or maintaining peace will gradually become easier. Promoting justice to all will become easier.

Peace is a product of justice. They work for peace who work for justice.

*This article, reprinted from the International Herald Tribune, has been adapted from an address by Mr. Nyerere, former president of Tanzania and facilitator of the Burundi peace talks, to the International Peace Academy in New York.*

## Tutsis could trigger end of colonial borders

By Ali A. Mazrui

NEW YORK — The crisis in eastern Zaire, and between Zaire and its neighbours, poses the greatest challenge yet to the artificial borders European imperial powers established at the turn of the century when they created the region's so-called "nation-states."

Yet the world's attention — narrowly focused on the movement and needs of refugees spotlighted by the media — ignores this underlying cause of instability. There is a crisis in eastern Zaire and resettlement problems in Rwanda, but the focus on that should not ignore Burundi which has its own simmering ethnic woes. Nor does the current disparity of the Hutu Interahamwe militia in Zaire necessarily mean that they will not regroup and start conspiring towards a future invasion of Rwanda.

It has taken a Tutsi-trigger to spark off an agonising reappraisal of whether the present borders are viable in the long run. On the negative side is the danger of the disintegration of Zaire. The largest and potentially richest French-speaking country in Africa, since its independence it has been the most unstable.

Will it break up into three or more separate countries under the weight of its chronic instability, aggravated by the successful Tutsi rebellion in the east, and the power vacuum created by the illness of President Mobutu Sese Seko?

Will this be symbolic of the fragility of most post-colonial states' territorial integrity?

Also on the negative side is the possibility of escalating conflict between forces in Zaire and Rwanda, potentially engulfing Burundi and Uganda as well — sending forth hundreds of thousands of new refugees all over southern and eastern Africa.

On the positive side, the present crisis provides an opportunity for long-term planning about African security and peace keeping. Long before the U.S. Clinton administration started championing an African rapid deployment force to deal with African political collapses, I had been recommending in African diplomatic circles and the Organisation of African Unity the establishment of a Pan African Emergency Force specially trained to intervene in crises such as those of Liberia, Somalia, Rwanda, Burundi and now eastern Zaire.

I had argued that if a modestly trained African army of a poor country like Tanzania could successfully intervene in Uganda in 1979 and end the tyranny and chaos created by President Idi Amin Dada, fifty African countries between them could create a more specially trained interventionist force for situations of political collapse. External friends of Africa could help with some of that training and with resources for logistical support.

The main difference between my proposal and that of the Clinton administration lies in accountability. While my proposal envisaged that such an army would be answerable to an African Security Council specially created under the Organisation of African Unity, the Clinton administration prefers accountability to the Security Council of the United Nations, and therefore indirectly to the Western powers who dominate that body.

Another possible scenario which is emerging from the present crisis in eastern Zaire and the clash between Zaire and Rwanda is the gradual redefining of the boundaries between Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi. Each one of these three countries has Hutus and Tutsis of its own. The European partition of Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries made no attempt to have national borders coincide with ethnic boundaries.

In the mid-1990s the Tutsis find themselves with the upper hand in Burundi, Rwanda and now Zaire, after fluctuating fortunes. Is this the moment to make ethnic boundaries coincide with national boundaries? Are we seeing the tumultuous process of creating a Tutsi "Israel" — an independent homeland for the Tutsis? Is a Tutsi-state being born?

Until the mid-1980s the Tutsis seemed to be the Kikuyu of Eastern Africa — a marginalised minority in Rwanda, Zaire and under a different name (the Hima) in Uganda. Temporarily they clung desperately and brutally to power in Burundi. But as a minority they seemed to be up against history. It was thought that in time they would become the marginalised of Burundi also.

It was not until 1986 that the tide turned. Yoweri Museveni, ethnically linked to the people of Rwanda, captured power in Uganda. The Tutsis and the Hima of Uganda were ethnic cousins. After Museveni's successful consolidation of his political base in Uganda, he met his obligation to the Rwandans by helping to train the Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF).

In 1994 the RPF staged a successful invasion of Rwanda from the Ugandan border. The Rwandan exiles from Uganda routed the Hutus, and established an alternative government in Kigali.

This operation created a situation where Hutu refugees in Zaire started plotting and training for a counter-offensive. To make matters worse, the Zairian security forces started picking on Zairian Tutsis who had been part of Zaire since before the partition of Africa in the nineteenth century.

When Zairian Tutsis were threatened with expulsion from their homeland by the armed forces, they decided to resist. They formed a resistance force (secretly supported by Rwanda) and turned out to be more than a match for thoroughly inefficient Zairian security forces.

A viable long-term solution is the federation of Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania. The armies of Rwanda and Burundi would be pensioned off. In this larger political community the Hutus and Tutsis would discover how much they have in common culturally, and may learn to be on the same political side on many issues in the enlarged Tanzania (just as their ethnic cousins in Uganda, the Hima and the Tru, have often voted on the same side against other groups in the larger national context of Uganda).

Unless the Hutus and Tutsis are either partitioned into separate countries or federated into a larger, stable and democratic political community, they are likely to turn against each other in a genocidal frenzy every few years.

The redrawing of colonial boundaries need not mean smaller and smaller African states. It could simply mean more rational and more viable political communities.

PANOS

## LETTERS

## Security through peace

To the Editor,

AS ISRAEL mourns its dead in the tragic helicopter crash on Feb. 4, one can only hope that this sad incident will make the Israeli government pause and think for a while. This incident demonstrates one more time the fragile nature of Israel's "security." Many Israelis try to delude themselves by thinking that peace comes through security. What happened clearly shows that it is only through lasting and comprehensive peace that true security can be provided and accidents, of any kind, can be avoided.

One can only hope again that the deaths of these mostly young soldiers will reawaken the quest for peace in Israel and help to keep this hope alive.

A. Tadros,  
Amman.

## Fanaticism is not the way

To the Editor:

TOURING THE premises of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem the other month, and the so-called Freuch hill, en route, the Israeli guide showed us a graveyard where many of the dead British soldiers in World War I were buried, saying that the memorial sign written over the gate of the cemetery, which mentions that the yard was offered by the Palestinians, was in fact meaning the Israelis, as she actually mentioned to the group.

It is well known that around the time of World War I, the Jewish community in Palestine was a small minority, since Israel had not been created, and thus the script really meant the Palestinian Arabs mainly. To me that was a funny moment during a long Saturday holiday.

However, what I think happens is that the Israelis doing their propaganda have swallowed the same pill we did before 1967, when the Arab propaganda was anything but rational, spreading many absurd issues, agitating our people while setting most of the world against us. At the time, the Israelis used it against us and won most of the world to their side, leaving us alone to face our destiny.

The world has changed and continues to change rapidly, so what used to be marketed before may not be suitable for the market nowadays.

The myths and fallacies the Israelis propaganda uses and fabricates while telling the world about a promised land, a united Jerusalem that will remain their capital to eternity and the supremacy of the selected and beloved God's people and the Biblical land of Israel will not work any more for a number of reasons and considerations. Here it is worth remembering what Nahom Goldman, a prominent Zionist and one of the founders of Israel, once said while defending a theory about a superior Jewish right when he mentioned that the conflict between the Jews and the Arabs is not a duel between what is wrong and what is right, but is rather one between two rights, and the Jewish right is having the upper place due to a religious cause which is what he called "the land of Israel."

Now Mr. Netanyahu is still terming Hebron and the other Palestinian territories as "the land of our fathers." He is always repeating and exaggerating the security factor, claiming it is the first concern of Israel, as if a tiny Palestinian entity could really endanger the almighty military power of Israel, with all its highly sophisticated weapons, sustained by an unlimited support of the U.S., adding to that a nuclear warfare capacity.

Peace is a true fact in the region today and we, the Arabs, have accepted it as a way of life; therefore, the Israelis will have to accept it as well if they really seek peaceful and good relations with their neighbours.

After all, we both, and together, must learn from the lesson of the past, dealing with ourselves and the world in a new language, a language suitable to and compatible with the prevailing norms and ethos, and never allow fanaticism a passage.

Maher A. Waked,  
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

BOOK REVIEW  
Dilemmas  
contradictionsWomen In Contemporary  
Old Conflicts And New Realities  
By Mona Habb  
Pavla Publications, Jerusalem

MAKING IT has produced a collection of essays on the position of women in the national movement and their role in the national movement. The book is a collection of essays on the position of women in the national movement and their role in the national movement.

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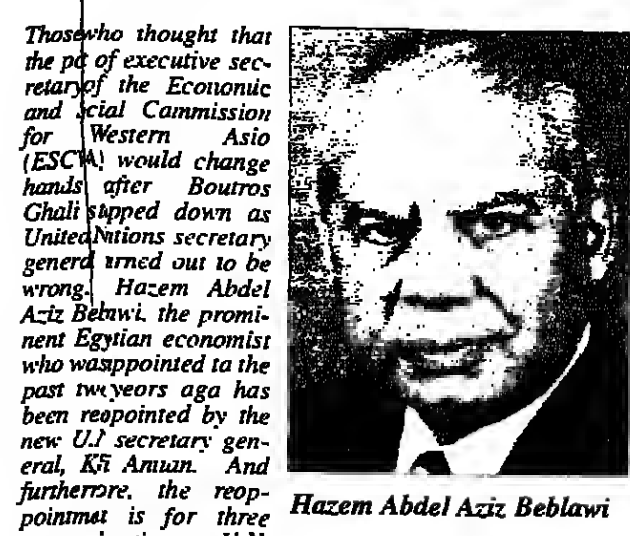
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## Society on the Move

# 'One man's mickle is another man's muckle'



Hazem Abdel Aziz Beblawi

Those who thought that the post of executive secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCA) would change hands after Boutros Ghali stepped down as United Nations secretary general turned out to be wrong. Hazem Abdel Aziz Beblawi, the prominent Egyptian economist who was appointed to the post two years ago has been reappointed by the new U.N. secretary general, Kofi Annan. And furthermore, the reappointment is for three years this time. U.N. staff selections, according to the spokesman for the secretary general, have been based on three principal guidelines: first, the need to bring new talent into the organization; second, the need to recognize performance by promoting staff from within the Secretariat; and third, the need to retain competent and experienced people to ensure continuity. A new appointments were given three-year contracts, those appointed, like Dr. Beblawi, "were dealt with on a case-by-case basis," the spokesman said. Dr. Beblawi, 60, was the chairman of the Export Development Bank of Egypt and the Export Credit Guarantee Company in Cairo when he was appointed to ESCWA. He will thus see the commission through its move from Amman back to its first home in Beirut. The move is still planned for September, provided the building where ESCWA is to be housed is ready. Incidentally, on ESCWA's spokesperson tells us that this claim was very off in reporting the number of staff (local and international) working at the organization last time he talked about its impending move to Beirut. The total number is more around 300 than the 520 (figure we were given from another source), the spokesperson said.

ambassador to Brazil. He had been serving as the number two person at the Ministry of Information for two-and-a-half years prior to the Bahrain assignment.

**WILKOMMEN:** New to Jordan is another German political foundation that has set up house in Amman — the Hanns Seidel Foundation. Germany has an unofficial club of four major political foundations representing the four largest parties in the federal republic. They are: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung of the Social Democratic Party; Konrad Adenauer Foundation of the Christian Democratic Party; Friedrich Naumann Foundation of the Free Democratic Party and the Rainbow Foundation of the Green Party. The first three maintain offices in Amman. What distinguishes Hanns Seidel Foundation from the other four is that it represents not a federal party but the separate Christian Social Union of the German state of Bavaria, which until 1918 was still a Kingdom. Still the foundation, named after the first Bavarian state prime minister who was elected after the new constitution of Bavaria in 1949, has worked on its federal image and thus is now considered part of the informal club of party foundations. The story of Hanns Seidel in the Middle East started in Jerusalem where the development and cooperative work of the organization had, until the Oslo accords, been centred in Israel. After that agreement the foundation took on some work in the occupied territories, but soon discovered that much of the international cooperative endeavours base themselves in Amman. So now they have branched eastwards and here they are. Last Saturday the representatives of the foundation in Jerusalem and Amman, Reinhold Böbel and Helmut Hornig, hosted a reception at the InterContinental Hotel to celebrate the inauguration of their Amman office. Although the turnout may not have been large (it was still Ramadan) HRH Prince Rood Bin Zeid was there to offer a few words of welcome. Mr. Hornig says the thrust of the foundation's work has and continues to be in vocational training.

ly to be announced until after Eid al Fitr. These close to Mr. Shahin, who also was the host of Fikr Wa Irba (Think and Win) and still hosts Na'oni Sohi (Yes, That's Right), both popular Jordanian television quiz shows, say the post at the Ministry of Youth is one he has always had his eye on.

**COLLEAGUE TO THE BIG LEAGUES:** The Jordan Times stoically and proudly bears its "train-em, make-em and lose-em" syndrome, and thus it was with applause that the paper said farewell to another one from its ranks. Ayman Al Safadi, our senior staff reporter for four years who was promoted to managing editor on Jan. 1, 1997, has moved to become international press officer for HRH Crown Prince Hassan. The past is one of several others being considered in the Office of the Crown Prince. Safadi's B.A. in English language and literature from Yarmouk University and masters in international journalism from Baylor University, in Waco, Texas, plus his professional journalistic experience in the U.S. and the Arab World (he was editor in chief of The Star weekly newspaper in Amman for one year, continues to contribute columns to the San Antonio Light newspaper in Texas, and has reported for the London-based Al Hayat daily and many other news organizations) have probably sufficiently equipped him for the demanding tasks at hand. He has travelled as a J.T. reporter with the Crown Prince several times, most recently to Madrid. As a political reporter, his stories have received praise and criticism, which usually means a journalist is doing a good job. But it appears to be Safadi's integrity and what he stands for that sealed his appointment. It goes without saying that we wish him the best of luck in his new career at the Royal Court.

**REMEMBER AMMAN WHEN?** Part of the Amman Municipality's programme for "evenings of Ramadan" last week included a lecture by Amman-born novelist Abdul Rahman Munif at the new City Hall. Mr. Munif, a Saudi Arabian who resides in Syria, lectured on his book about his life in Amman in the 1940s. Full of anecdotes, the contents of the lecture prompted one senior citizen in the full house of attendees to ask Mr. Munif: "Did you take notes as a child? You recall things the rest of us have long forgotten." To which Mr. Munif responded: "No I never took notes, I only started writing in my 40s after I joined politics." A comment came back: "Perhaps our political politicians should try their hands at writing." For those who may have missed some of the events scheduled by Mayor Moudouh Abbadi and his team during the holy month, there is still one he promises will be a spectacular celebration. Lights and music are on for tonight at 7:30 in Ras Al Ain, so bundle up.



SIGN OF THINGS TO COME: HRH Crown Prince Hassan shakes hands with then J.T. Managing Editor Ayman Safadi in Madrid in early January (photo by Boghos)

Black History Month in the U.S. and the American Center in Amman is hosting a series of events highlighting the achievements of African American women. It's been a long firm dates and times with the U.S. embassy, but now you know what is planned. The centre will present a lecture on African American women's contributions to society and business, and its Worldview Dialogue programme will bring together African American women who have excelled in the areas of media, art, cinema, government and business to discuss their experiences with counterparts from Jordan. The latter event is thus far planned for Feb. 23 at 4:30 pm. African American writer Elena Featherstone, author of "Skin Deep," will hold a Telepress Conference. A rhythm and blues band called "Stratus" is being brought to Amman for an evening of entertainment. What is unfortunate, however, is that that event is one night only and thus by invitation only. February's film theme is Black History Month too, and the flicks listed so far are "Malcolm X" and "Gloria." And new books on the shelves of the American Center Library include The Black Diaspora by Ronald Segal; Mississippi: An American Journey, by Anthony Walton; and The Guide to Classic Recorded Jazz, by Tom Piazza. The Media Forum, which was launched only last month, will feature the topic "Press Freedom and the Law," with academics and journalists discussing how the law defines freedom in a democratic society.

AFRICAN AMERICAN PORTRAIT: February is

Jennifer Hanourel

**BACK IN HIS SEAT:** Secretary General of the Ministry of Information Nayef Mawla is back after his six-month assignment working for Bahraini Crown Prince Hamad Bin Issa Al Khalifa. Late last spring the Jordanian government had approved Mr. Mawla's secondment to Sheikh Hamad's office. The mission (which was "personal") has been accomplished, said Mr. Mawla, who is taking a vacation until the end of Eid al Fitr. Well aware that the Ministry of Information was slated for phase-out, Mr. Mawla plans to be in his office after the holidays. Mr. Mawla is a career diplomat who served in Tunisia, and the United States, and was later ambassador to Indonesia with accreditation to Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei, and then



Rafé Shahin

## BOOK REVIEW

### Dilemmas and contradictions

Women In Contemporary Palestine: Between Old Conflicts And New Realities  
By Maria Holt  
Passia Publications, Jerusalem 1996

MARIA HOLT has produced a concise but comprehensive overview of the post-1948 women in Palestinian society and their role in the national movement. She successfully weaves together a number of different threads in the historiography of Palestinian women to enable recurrent themes and attitudes to be elucidated. The first two chapters provide a historical overview of women's involvement in the national movement from the British Mandate era to the present day. While providing a brief introduction to the major turning points in Palestinian nationalism, and women's activism within the struggle, Holt also introduces a number of significant themes which are developed in subsequent chapters: The nature of women's participation — its definitions and delimitations; the significance of women as symbols of moral purity and honour; the conflict between social change and cultural conservatism in relation to women's domain, and the importance of different forms of cultural assertion. Each of these themes is explored through extensive and constructive use of secondary sources, as well as a number of personal interviews. Thus the reader is introduced to the range of scholarship and the key debates around Palestinian women's activism. In this sense the book is an invaluable source for those interested in the role of women in the national movement. It is meticulously sourced and referenced. Good use is made of material from newsletters and other organisational documentation that is not widely available, as well as the more established Palestinian and Western authors in the field. Women in Contemporary Palestine is welcome particularly for its insight into the movement and its appeal to women. It is all too easy to dismiss them as reactionary. Tempting as this may be, it does little to further our understanding of what has become one of the most coherent and substantial political and ideological challenges to the PLO. Maria Holt does not take this approach, but instead seeks to elucidate the appeal of the Islamists to sections of Palestinian society — including women. In this she highlights the role of youth and suggests that some women "far from being the unwilling repositories of the ideological agenda, are full partners in what they regard as an empowering and inescapable project."

This short book (the English text is 90 pages and appears back to back with an Arabic translation) highlights many of the contradictions and dilemmas of women's participation in the national movement, and this serves as a thought-provoking introduction to the current debates about women's status and their role and contribution to the national movement — Middle East International.

Sarah Cave

## A thesis too far

Why Syria Goes To War: Thirty Years Of Confrontation  
By Fred H. Lawson  
Cornell University Press, New York & London 1996. \$29.95/£23.50

THE OBJECT of this exercise in intellectual gymnastics is to show that, contrary to received wisdom, Syrian foreign policy has been guided by domestic political and economic factors rather than by personality considerations, sectarian attitudes and great power influences. To prove his point, Professor Lawson takes five episodes which in his view demonstrate the fact that aggressive postures (confrontation with Israel in 1967 and intervention in Lebanon in 1976) are explicable in terms of "accumulation crises" while moderate stances (towards Jordan in 1970, Iraq in 1982 and Turkey in 1994) were adopted because the economy was comparatively strong and the domestic political situation consequently less tense. "Accumulation crises" are defined in highly convoluted Marxian terms as involving credit rigidity or fragility, over-investment and over-accumulation of capital. To this reviewer at least, the account is over-sophisticated. Moreover, to sustain such a thesis requires the fulfilment of certain conditions. First, one must be selective about the episodes chosen to illustrate it. Thus the author omits considerations of two of the major occasions on which Syria did in fact go to war: in 1973 and 1982. But then in neither of those cases would it be easy to argue that the prime factors were economic, as distinct from effacing the shame of 1967 in the first instance and living up to the propaganda of "the throbbing heart of Arabdom" in the second.

Second, while the examples used may contain elements appropriate to the author's argument, he must show that it was these elements which were paramount. Although he is more persuasive in the two aggressive examples, Syria's intervention in Lebanon can be, and has been, interpreted more convincingly than on the grounds that new resources were required to shore up an ailing economy to that intervention was necessary to mitigate intra-regime conflicts. As far as concerns the alleged causal connection between periods of economic upturn and conciliatory attitudes to Jordan, Iraq and Turkey, the reasoning seems suspect, and at times inconsistent. In the 1970 episode, Professor Lawson appears to be trying to have it both ways: Damascus is "taking steps to mobilise public sentiment against external enemies" while at the same time limiting "popular mobilisation in support of the Palestine cause... to prevent unbridled public hostility towards Israel and Jordan from exacerbating popular dissatisfaction with its political-economic programme." A similar objection might be raised to the author's explanation of the "momentary relaxation" in Syria's intransigence towards Israel in 1992 — namely, that it coincided with disaffection over economic liberalisation and with new resources flowing into the treasury: both factors ought, according to his theory, to have increased rather than decreased intransigence. In 1982, Professor Lawson claims that confrontation with Baghdad was linked to the latter's perceived involvement in the Hama uprising (which is correct as far as it goes), but then attributes the brief period of reconciliation to the subsequent "harmonisation of dissonances" within Syria. It seems far more likely that, for all his

## BOOK REVIEW

antagonism to the Baghdad Ba'athists, Assad did not wish to tangle with them when he was otherwise engaged with the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. Under the shrewd, cautious and pragmatic Assad perhaps the remarkable thing is that Syria has so rarely cut its diplomatic coat according to its economic cloth. His policies towards Lebanon and the PLO, and his alliance with Iran, were pursued despite incurring the displeasure of his Soviet sponsor or jeopardising the benefits of Gulf gold — or both. It was only when Syria's superpower ally was no more that Assad threw in his lot with the American-led coalition against Saddam — and his political gains in both Iraq and Lebanon were no less valuable than the economic pay-off for doing so. In any case, as the Hama episode made clear, the ruthless streak in Assad finds other ways of dealing with internal discontents than the complex manoeuvrings postulated by Lawson. All this is not to say that his "accumulation crises" played no part in Syrian diplomacy. The internal crisis/external distraction syndrome is familiar enough. But methinks the author doth protest too much. His book is more valuable for its economic overview than as an explanation of foreign policy formulation — Middle East International.

Ivor Lucas

## Pedestrian on two wheels

Like Water in a Dry Land: a journey into modern Israel  
By Bettina Selby  
Harper Collins, London 1996 £14.99

YOU CAN'T beat cycling if you really want to see a country or a region properly. And by properly, I mean being aware of and absorbing the changes to the landscape. If you drive, everything passes too quickly. Go by foot and you travel too slowly for the changes to be apparent. But on two wheels you can cover reasonable distances and watch the landscape unfold. On top of that, there are few more exhilarating feelings than pedalling along through magnificent scenery. So it is a shame that Bettina Selby's cycle journey from Cyprus to Jerusalem should prove such a pedestrian read. She covers some fascinating territory,

starting in Cyprus ferrying across to Lebanon, on to Syria and thence to Jordan and Israel. Jerusalem is her final destination. The trouble is that she has not made her mind up whether she wants the book to be an account of an adventurous cycle journey or a political travelogue. It skips back and forth between the minutiae of cycling and camping and historical monologues, and somehow it left me feeling short-changed. It would have been better if she had stuck with the cycling, because the best bits of the book come when she is concerned solely with the problems of her journey. She gets stuck in a ludicrous bureaucratic tangle getting on to a ship and out of Cyprus and has a slightly alarming experience when she reaches Beirut. When she ventures into political waters, some of her

comments leaves you gasping, especially from someone who has been to the region several times before. At one point, in Beirut, she remarks in surprise "that so far on this journey I had heard not one single word in praise of Israel or its leaders." And she lapses easily into Western stereotypes about the Arab World. An Arabic radio broadcast is described as "an endless emotive stream of what sounded like a fanatical harangue, either religious or political, which I had no idea." Then why say this? The announcer could have been reading the weather forecast. To be fair, the chapter on her visit to Gaza does betray more subtle thinking and a real awareness of the realities of life for the Palestinians. But by then most people would have put the book down — Middle East International.

Andrew North



# More input needed

By Jean-Claude Elias

WITH THE proliferation and the variety of tasks one can accomplish using a PC, the need for better, faster and more practical data input devices has become vital. Feeding a computer with data using just a keyboard and a mouse is no longer enough. The processing of images, sounds and other advanced formats of information, combined with the ever spiralling size of storage units — disks, tapes — calls for appropriate input equipment.

Perhaps the most sophisticated data type one can send to a PC is the image format. There is a certain number of devices available for such a purpose. Most of them have been around for years. The most recent such "inventions" are the digital cameras. Introduced five or six years ago, they have evolved from prohibitively expensive and primitive to affordable and performing. Yet digital cameras, offered now at JD500 to JD1,000 for consumer-type models, do not entirely satisfy the demanding user. They simply do not produce images with a resolution, a sharpness that is up to current personal computing standards. To obtain truly a photographic quality in input and output one has to acquire one of the high-end models priced at more than JD6,000.

A more performing and more affordable device is the document scanner. These machines have been on the market for more than ten years now. From the small, handheld model to the flatbed A4 one, scanners deliver superb quality results while costing around JD300 for regular models and less than JD1,000 for the very best.

Scanners are easy to use and truly versatile. You can scan in black and white or in full colours. A choice of different resolutions (density of dots or sharpness) is easily selectable by software. Whether you want to scan a photograph for further processing and editing or an important document that you simply want to store on the hard disk, a scanner often is the ideal solution. Users may scan an original signature, a company's logotype that they can later integrate instantly in a word processing letter or a fax for example.

The recent improvement in colour printers has made scanners even more interesting to have and operate. It was frustrating, a few years ago, to obtain a good scan of a fine colour photograph only to print it out in black and white. With the new amazing colour ink-jet printers we have no

## chip talk



excuses now not to use scanners at their full potential.

Perhaps one of the most interesting aspect of scanners remains OCR (Optical Character Recognition) which consists of scanning an available, already written document and making the computer translate the obtained image into an actual word processing text that one can further edit, manipulate and reprint at will. OCR in itself justifies the use of scanners, especially that the technique is now available not only for Latin but also for Arabic alphabets.

If scanning a colourful photograph is fun and easy it can also be "dangerous" to your computer. If you set the scanning software to full colours, run the scanner at its highest resolution and if you are handling a large size photograph, you may cause the memory capacity and/or the hard disk of the PC to overflow and stop from working. Indeed high quality colour image create huge files on disk — those who are familiar with the process know it all too well. For example an A4 size picture scanned at 600 dpi (dots per inch) optical resolution and in high-bit true colours may create a huge 50 to 80 MB (million bytes or characters) file. Unless you own a powerful Pentium machine with enough memory and disk, the computer may not take it at all and go on strike. In any case the very processing of the file, when it works, will take several minutes.

Scanning your whole family photo album in five minutes while preserving its original quality, in order to store it in digital form on a computer's disk, isn't an operation you can perform today. It will take a few more years of technological improvement before such an undertaking becomes feasible. In the meantime, you can still enjoy the more than interesting possibilities offered by today's scanners for what they are.

# Looking the other way

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

WE CAN be passive if others desire us to be. We can turn a blind eye if it will make others feel a whole lot better. We can also look the other way and ignore the injustices that happens around us. We can do all of this.

But because we happen to believe in who we are and what we want to be, we will think very hard before we do any of it.

We can look past the fact that the Jordanians who can afford more things in life tune to foreign television channels for entertainment. They tune to Future Television and jam the station's, and Jordan's, switchboards whenever the daily competition goes on air.

We can also look past the fact that this television channel which we had thought was a little bit more decent than others is no more than your typical executioner because those who run it are willing to sacrifice decent presenters for the sake of pleasing, and appeasing, Gulf-based traders.

We can overlook the crimes of honour that are on the increase in our tribally-defined society.

We can also overlook the fact that those who commit such crimes, most of the time, get away with murder by taking advantage of these tribal affiliations.

We can overlook the fact that many buildings and structures around the Kingdom are liable to collapse because of structural failures.

We can also overlook the fact that these failures are due to poor workmanship and the absence of an efficient supervisory body.

We can overlook the rumours that some officials claim to be someone else whenever journalists try to reach them on their mobile phones. Mobile phones which were intended to make these officials more accessible in the first place.

We can also overlook the rumours that corruption fever is widespread in those societies created for the welfare of the blind. We can, you could say, simply turn a blind eye.

We can forget about those ships at sea where, rumour has it, gambling and peep shows take place to cater for the needs of the rich and famous.

But since we are neither, we need not even worry about them.

We can look past talk of embezzlement and malpractice at the Professional Associations. We can because it is not in the public interest to undermine confidence in these institutions.

We can ignore the fact that this is a very small country where everyone knows one another and where rumours are most of the time accepted half-truths. Maybe because they are?

We can be open-minded and look past the fact that alcohol smuggling by certain influential people will be the



new order of business once a prohibition is enforced. You see, someone has to make money out of the prohibition, right?

We can also ignore the fact that much of the struggling currently going on is undertaken by such people.

We can forget about the missing Jordanian passports that were stolen lately in a neighbouring country. Someone's job, not ours, must be to look out for them.

We can look past the "Curse of the Chair" hat has befallen many people in this country. We can, it will not be an easy undertaking.

We can ignore the fact that many of the accidents on our roads are caused by crazed drivers switching lanes whenever they felt like it. While we think that we ignore these drivers, reality soon catches up with us.

We can overlook the fact that a weekly tablo can get away with provocatively publishing the name of the Christian members of parliament under the title "Members of parliament not fasting in Ramadan." But why did they do it in the first place?

We can overlook the fact that some distinguished journalists are banned from writing without any prior or institution taking the blame. Maybe someone had thought it was about time they had taken a vacation.

We can overlook the fact that the newspapers filed with more advertisements than analyses and news may not be worth the paper they are printed on. We can, but they will keep on being printed.

We can also look past the fact that several people in positions of authority lack the academic credentials demanded by that position. But does this matter if they are doing a good job?

Finally, we can overlook the fact that constructive criticism is no longer accepted in a society where everything is running like clockwork. But what do you do when there is nothing to criticize?

We can overlook all of these things. We can believe that we had dreamt them all up. We can also tow the party line. But if we do that, then we would be not only kidding ourselves, not only jeopardising our integrity, but also dooming ourselves to oblivion.

## JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

### Thursday, February 6, 1997

1:00	Holy Koran
1:05	Min Al Hadi Al Mohammadi
1:30	Cartoon (Ovide & The Gang)
2:30	They Came From Outer Space
3:00	Feature Film — Space Chase
	Starring: Traci Hart & Lee Korf
4:50	Call For Prayer And Link With Channel One
5:30	French Programmes
	Entertainment Varieties

### 7:30 News Headlines

7:35	Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air
8:00	America's Funniest Videos
8:30	Mini Series — Innocent Victims
10:00	News In English
10:25	Boston Pops
12:00	Feature Film — That's Entertainment
	Starring: Fred Astair & Gene Kelly

### Monday, February 10, 1997

7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Atomes Crochus
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Parenthood
8:00	Islam In The West
8:30	Babylon-5 (Science Fiction)
9:10	Kung Fu-The Legend Continues
10:00	News In English
10:25	Islam In A Changing World
11:00	Feature Film — Johnny's Girl
	Starring: Treat Williams & Mia Kirschner
1:00	Ramadan Talks

### 1:00 Holy Koran

1:05	Cartoon
2:30	Tilt
3:00	French Programmes
4:00	Feature Film — William O'Leary & Miguel Perrer
5:30	I Love Lucy
6:00	French Programme — Magazine
	Science — Cinq Sur Cinq
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	America's Funniest Videos
8:00	Best Seller: Seduced By Madness
10:00	News In English
10:25	Feature Film — Remembrance
	Angle Dickinson & Jeffery Nordling
12:00	The Four Seasons (A Visualisation Of Vivaldi's A Seasons Shot In Vienna)

### Tuesday, February 11, 1997

7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Allo La Terre
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Down To Earth
8:00	Oriental Rugs (Doc.)
8:30	Babylon 5
9:10	Hunter
10:00	News In English
10:25	Documentary
11:00	Feature Film — Savannah Smiles
	Starring: Mak Miller & Chris Robinson
11:50	Mini Series
1:05	Ramadan Talks

### 1:00 Holy Koran

1:05	Cartoon
2:30	Tilt
3:00	Feature Film — A Tribute To The Boys —
	Laurel & Hardy
5:30	I Love Lucy
6:00	French Programme
	Serie — La Lumiere Des Justes
6:15	Magazine — Extra Large
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Murphy Brown
8:00	America's Funniest Videos
8:30	Best Seller — Seduced By Madness
10:00	News In English
10:25	Feature Film — Empire Of The Sun
	Starring: John Malkovich & Miranda Richardson
12:00	Boston Pops

### Wednesday, February 12, 1997

1:00	Holy Koran
1:05	Cartoon
2:30	Tilt
3:00	French Programme
4:00	Peking Acrobats
5:30	I Love Lucy
6:00	French Programme
	Serie — Jack
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Ziva
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Hangin' With Mr. Cooper
8:00	America's Funniest Videos
8:30	Mini Series — Innocent Victims
10:00	News In English
10:25	Yanni
11:50	Dances With Wolves

### 2:00 Holy Koran

2:05	The Muppet Show
2:30	Cartoon (Adventures On The Rainbow Pond)
3:00	French Programme
4:00	Earth Revealed (Doc.)
4:30	Escape From Jupiter
5:00	News Flash
5:02	Challenge (Doc.)
5:30	Border Town
6:00	French Programme
	Document — Ushuaia
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Sports Et Musique
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Grace Under Fire
8:00	Challenges
9:10	Drama
10:00	News In English
10:25	Cobra
11:00	Hart To Hart

### Saturday, February 8, 1997

1:00	Holy Koran
1:05	Cartoon
2:30	Tilt
3:00	French Programme
4:00	Peking Acrobats
5:30	I Love Lucy
6:00	French Programme
	Serie — Jack
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Ziva
7:30	News Headlines
7:35	Hangin' With Mr. Cooper
8:00	America's Funniest Videos
8:30	Mini Series — Innocent Victims
10:00	News In English
10:25	Yanni
11:50	Dances With Wolves

### Sunday, February 9, 1997

1:00	Holy Koran
1:05	Cartoon
2:30	Tilt
3:00	French Programme
4:00	Peking Acrobats
5:30	I Love Lucy
6:00	French Programme
	Magazine — Fant Pas Rever
7:00	Le Journal
7:15	Magazine — Sports Et Musique

## ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

Mohammad A. Shugair

### INCREDIBLE FACTS

\* Well, Spaghetti wasn't from Italy! It originally came from China some 800 years ago. Chinese spaghetti is called Lo Mein and is used in the best Chinese cookery. Why don't you try some?

\* If you pick an orange too early, it will remain unripe. Oranges refuse to ripen unless on the tree, unlike most fruits which will ripen when picked.



\* Eccentric American millionaire William Randolph Hearst, was so fond of telephones that he had them fitted all over the house — and even in the gardens. Many were concealed in tree trunks.

The man looked a little doubtful.  
"You mean I'll be able to read without going to school?" he asked.

\* The question before the class was whether "trousers" was singular or plural.  
The point was settled by declaring them singular at the top and plural at the bottom.

\* The professor of English read aloud to the class a very poorly written composition. When asked for comments the class criticised it unmercifully.  
The professor admitted that he had written it and when the students began to blush explained:  
"I spent two very difficult hours last night putting in this composition all the poor writing that I could think of. What amazes me, though, is how you fellows can write these things day after day in only ten minutes."

### TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE

(World Capitals)

1. What is the southernmost world capital on the globe?
2. Name three European capitals that are situated on the Danube River?
3. What is the name of the capital of both Hong Kong and Seychelles?
4. Name the six countries that use the national name for their capital?
5. What is the capital of the alphabetically first member of the United Nations?

### PUZZLES

(Half Adjectives)

BELOW are given ten anagrams, each of half a ten-lettered adjective. Thus, if DEROGATORY were included, you might find GORGED and YOTAR.  
Can you fix the halves together to produce the five original adjectives?

- |          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. BESIL | 6. PIPOR  |
| 2. BLITE | 7. POIMS  |
| 3. FEBEN | 8. SOUNE  |
| 4. GIDES | 9. SUOTO  |
| 5. GINDI | 10. TINGE |



## Arts & Gold

By Mark Kennedy  
for Associated Press

NEW YORK — Goldie Hawn is scanning newspaper headlines in a low cut, jet black dress and high-heeled boots.

Only the tiny pair of red shoes, more evidence that the veteran actress is new to show business.

Hawn, 46, is wearing the dress and then leans forward to kiss a man on the cheek.

"I'm back," she purrs sarcastically. "I'm back and I'm back."

The 54-year-old actress is resolute from a long spell of Hollywood's wildly successful first-wave club with the week-end musical come to the stage. I Love You.

The new role, happily named "Comedian" to her stage name, Hawn, made her first Broadway debut in the musical at the 1961 New York World's Fair.

"I'm going to be the one thing," she says, "a comedian." She is, in fact, a comedian. She is, in fact, a comedian. She is, in fact, a comedian.

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## Moorecroft

FOUNDED IN 1897 by William Moorecroft, it is known as the "Ballet of the Century" and is one of the most famous art performances in Europe. Still in London, it is still using its original technique.

Great patience and skill are used by the artists people at Moorecroft's studios (pictured) in applying the many vibrant colours that build-up the exquisite finish of each piece.

To the man up to Moorecroft's century in 1997, the year sees the launch of exciting new collections by the company's brilliant young designer, Rachel Bishop.

She has breathed fresh life into William Morris's original prototypes, adapting them to a three-dimensional shape. In "A Tribute to Charles Rennie Mackintosh," Ms. Bishop has adapted the work of the Scottish architect and decorative artist for some new pieces.

Demand for Moorecroft pottery at auction and in the stores is huge with large followings especially in Japan, Canada and Australia. The renowned auctioneers, Christie's, hold an annual auction of Moorecroft each autumn.

The pottery is still made in the traditional first evened by the company in 1901. Its massive bottle kiln, now a Grade II listed building of outstanding architectural and historical interest, Moorecroft's.

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## Health fears persist as pill peddlers recover from crackdown

Medicines are widely available on the streets of Cameroon and are much cheaper than in government pharmacies. But the market free-for-all is doing more harm than good.

By Ntemfac Ofege

YAOUNDE — A government clampdown on Cameroon's medicine sellers has failed, and the vendors are back on the streets offering a pill for every ill.

Official action was taken after state-owned radio and television shocked the country with a report on the death of four brothers and sisters who had been treated with fake de-worming pills bought on the street.

Police swooped on travelling salesmen and confiscated their wares, which they generally carry in baskets on their heads.

Corruption took its usual toll, however, and many vendors were soon seen selling the "confiscated" drugs. In addition, the crackdown took place only in some parts of the biggest towns, leaving many vendors untouched.

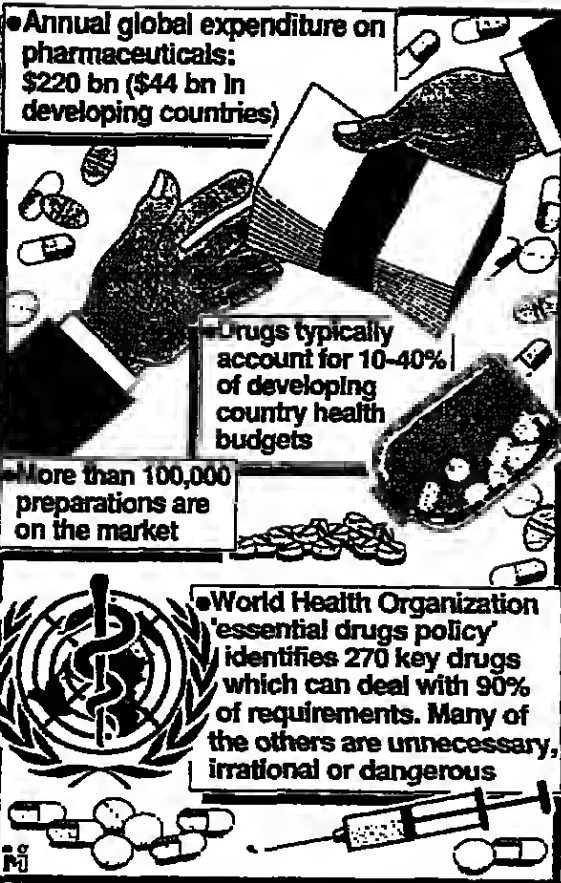
Now it is business as usual again, with medicine peddlers — some of them university graduates or drop-outs — operating under the noses of the police.

Most have little or no knowledge of the drugs they are selling.

The result is that thousands of people take the wrong medicine or the right medicine in the wrong doses. Both actions can be dangerous or even lethal.

On top of this, many street

### The drugs jungle



which has a bad reputation for counterfeit goods.

"I don't care if the medicines come from Taiwan, India, Nigeria or some god-forsaken place," says Morfaw defiantly. "The one thing I know is that the drugs work. Call it psychology, call it anything you like, but I've got to survive."

A long economic recession and subsequent devaluation have led to state cutbacks in health provision. The local office of the World Health Organisation (WHO) says health expenditure accounts for five per cent of the country's annual budget. It recommends 10 per cent.

Quality control on drugs is virtually non-existent. The National Office of Pharmaceuticals crumbled under huge debts and general mismanagement. Its place has been taken by the National Laboratory, under the Ministry of Public Health, but it lacks the resources to fulfil its mandate, which entails testing agricultural products, cosmetics and beverages as well as drugs, for the entire central African region.

Health officials estimate that there are up to 4,000 pharmaceutical products on the market in Cameroon. The National Laboratory tested 85 in 1994-95, of which 22 were found to be fake, and 102 last year, of which 19 were fake.

Leading pharmacist Dr. Pierre Sompwé calls for a fresh policy on drugs use: "The issue is not to organise street sessions with the police to confiscate pharmaceuticals. The entire system must be reviewed."

"It is so bad that even if we are not importing fake drugs into this country, the real drugs are so poorly managed, and packaged that they end up being ruined before they get to the patients," says Sompwé — Gemini News.

vendors are selling counterfeit products that do nothing to treat their customers' illnesses.

Money spent by cash-strapped consumers on useless or inappropriate pharmaceutical products is sometimes diverted from food budgets — resulting in malnutrition which makes people weaker and more vulnerable to ill-health.

The problem is that the salesmen are meeting a huge public demand. "What do you want us to do?" asks an irate Johnny Morfaw, a senior civil servant, as he buys anti-malaria tablets from a hawk.

He says prices have tripled since the 1993 currency devaluation: "You go to the hospital and they give you a prescription list that reads like the list of (President) Biya's cabinet."

(The Cameroon government has more than 40 ministers). If I bought from the pharmacies, it would cost about 40,000 (CFA) francs to settle one prescription alone.

"Listen, since the government slashed my salary, I earn only 60,000 francs a month. With the street vendors, I spend only 100 francs for a couple of malaria tablets. The tablets keep me happy. I keep the vendors happy. We're in business."

He knows the dangers. Reports that a large consignment of anti-malaria tablets for Yaounde Central Hospital contained nothing but chalk received widespread publicity last year, and the quality of drugs sold on the streets has long been an issue. Many are known to be imports from Nigeria.



The successful new hearing aid is being fitted to a demonstration dummy

## Microelectronics for the partially deaf

MUNICH — With normal hearing, you can actually distinguish between hot and cold coffee being poured into a cup. A new Siemens hearing aid — named "Music" — helps people with defective hearing to pick up such marginally contrasting sounds. The device processes sound in two separate frequency fields.

Because many people with a degree of deafness pick up high and low tones differently, the Siemens aid balances out such divergences. Soft sounds are strengthened and loud

noises which they can hear anyway remain unaltered. The hearing aid — designed to adapt to a range of deafnesses — is no bigger than a hazelnut and is placed within the ear at a point at which sounds are picked up by people with normal hearing. This improves directional hearing, particularly in a noisy environment. Additionally, sophisticated microelectronics are said by medical experts in Germany to prevent distortion of high sound levels as they are picked up — IN-Press.

## AIDS prevention better than no cure — China's 'last' chance?

By Yuan Ye & Li Nu'er

BEIJING — AIDS-control experts and health officials in China are confident they can avert an Africa-like AIDS epidemic, saying tighter and tougher measures are at hand to check the spread of the deadly disease.

Although the incidence of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection is low for China (relative to its population of 1.2 billion), the Ministry of Public Health (MPH) has announced a national medium- and long-term plan of action for HIV/AIDS prevention and control.

The aim is to control the spread of the disease before the year 2000. "Now is the prime time for prevention and control of HIV infection — it could be the last chance," warned Prof. Chen Minzhang, the minister. "We have no time to waste."

At the core of the plan will be the establishment, by the end of the century, of a nationwide HIV/AIDS monitoring network with some 400 clinics. Also set up will be an advanced national HIV/AIDS laboratory along with modern laboratories in all provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities.

Under the ambitious plan: • Central and provincial government departments responsible for budgets, education, scientific research, media campaigns and law enforcement will participate;

• AIDS awareness will be promoted through the government-controlled mass media and by special agencies in schools and among ordinary people, particularly youths and high-risk

groups such as prostitutes and drug addicts; • Methods used by other countries in curbing HIV infection, including greater condom use, will be promoted in China; and

• Law enforcement departments will be made responsible for cracking down on the illegal blood supply business, drug abuse and prostitution. These are the main channels of HIV transmission in China.

Fears that an AIDS explosion might occur in China in the absence of strong steps were voiced last October at a national conference on HIV/AIDS prevention and control held in Beijing last October. It was attended by Chinese AIDS experts and government officials and representatives of multilateral donors.

"Experts fear that the next battleground for HIV/AIDS after Africa may include China, even though China is still a low-incidence country in terms of reported cases of HIV/AIDS," said Arthur Holcombe of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The first AIDS case identified in China was a foreign tourist in 1985. By the end of August 1996, health authorities had uncovered 4,305 HIV-positive cases, including 131 with full-blown AIDS.

But some experts say that inadequate detection methods mean the actual number of HIV-positive people in China could be substantially higher — anywhere, in fact, between 50,000 and 100,000.

They point out that all but two of China's 30 provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities have reported

HIV/AIDS cases.

A UNDP study on the economic implications of HIV/AIDS in Asian countries estimates that the cost to China in terms of health care and lost labour could be \$2 billion annually by the year 2000.

"General ignorance about HIV/AIDS, drug abuse, prostitution, illegal blood supply and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) may fuel the epidemic," said Dai Zhicheng, director of the Department of Disease Control in the Public Health Ministry.

The current number of STD patients alone may have reached three million, and will keep rising in the next 20 years, experts predicted.

Although the situation is critical, both experts and officials are optimistic about the future of HIV/AIDS control in China.

They pointed out that in addition to the screening clinics and test laboratories across the country, three regional prevention and treatment centres for HIV and STDs have been set up in the provinces of Guangdong, Yunnan and Jiangsu.

According to a report released by the Department of Disease Control, China's 42 monitoring centres in big cities conduct tests twice annually on four high-risk target groups: people attending STD clinics, prostitutes, drug addicts and long-distance truck drivers.

However, experts are urging the establishment of similar facilities in the country's vast rural areas and smaller cities, which are also vulnerable to the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Research work on

AIDS medicine has been carried out by Chinese pharmacologists. Although the prospects seem bleak at present, experts hope that breakthroughs will be made in developing traditional Chinese herbal medicines for the treatment of AIDS.

"However, what we can do now — surely the most effective way — is to educate the public about the social and medical ills caused by prostitution and drug abuse," said Ye Shunkai, director of the National STDs and Leprosy Control Centre.

The services of government institutions, non-governmental organisations, press and media have been enlisted in large anti-AIDS publicity campaigns in recent years, particularly around World AIDS Day on Dec. 1.

Meanwhile, financial and technological support from multilateral donors is playing an important role in China's AIDS research and prevention.

Donors have committed a total of \$17.4 million in support of China's HIV/AIDS awareness and control efforts. The country has benefited from U.N. assistance, which is intended to help increase China's understanding of the experience of other countries in combating HIV/AIDS and to support services to HIV/AIDS victims.

"Unlike India and Thailand, China still has the opportunity to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS," said Holcombe of UNDP. But he warned against complacency, saying: "We must not lose valuable time" — Panos Feature.

## WEEKEND CROSSWORD

IMAGINE THAT!

By Gayle Dean

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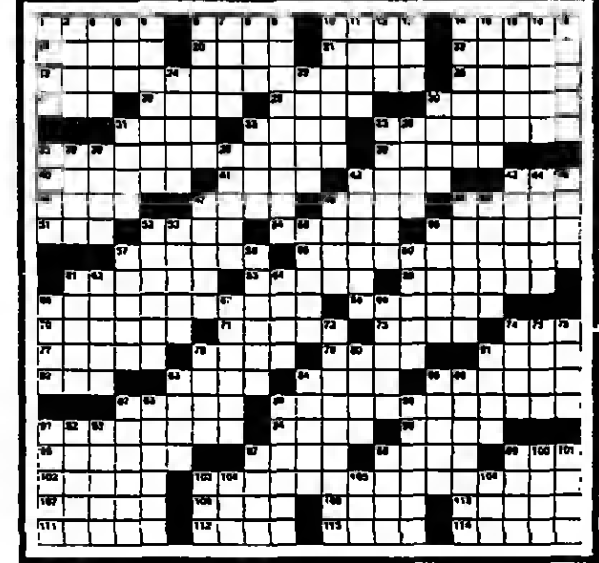
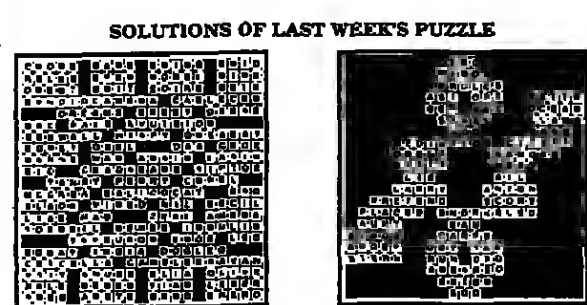


Diagram 1, 17x17

By Don Johnson

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## Flower vendors and municipality at odds over moving of central market

By Ghaila Alul  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Nurseries and flower-shop owners are complaining that sales and prices of their flowers went down 40 per cent after the Amman Municipality closed down the Amman flower bourse on Dec. 25.

Bourse manager Mazen Ghalayini told the Jordan Times on Tuesday that the municipality ordered the closure of the bourse after accusing it of running its operation from a residential area.

He accused the municipality of fabricating excuses to legalise the closure of the bourse, which was then moved to Fuheis, 20 kilometres west of Amman.

Mr. Ghalayini argued that the previous location did not violate any law, noting that the bourse, which was established 12 years ago, was located on top of a car service station and across of a parking for junk cars.

"The nearest house to the bourse is 500 metres away," he said.

However, Mayor Mamdouh Ahbadi countered that the bourse was practising monopoly and said that bidding should not be practised within the boundary of the Amman Municipal zone without the municipality's supervision.

"One agent is controlling the flower market which is against the law," said Mr. Ahbadi, who added that this agent should give others a chance to act as intermediary between flower producers and buyers.

He said the municipality had opened a new bourse market and invited all flower producers to operate from there, adding that it was offering a better space and a better working atmosphere.

Mr. Ghalayini said the municipality wanted JD3,000 a year for the right to conduct bidding, adding that "by closing our bourse and opening theirs means they want to practise monopoly."

Mr. Ghalayini accused the municipality of trying "to destroy 12 years of business for the sake of making the municipality bourse the strongest in the market."

Marketing manager of Alissar Nursery Ghassan Mzayek,

who sells his flowers at the bourse, complained that the municipal bourse "does not have a proper mechanism for marketing flowers."

He said "the new small location in Fuheis has also prevented us from marketing our flowers and forced us to lower the prices of our produce."

"The closure also caused us inconveniences. There isn't enough space for our flowers or for the producers," he said, adding that the location is far from Amman which stood against many flower producers to participate in the bidding.

"This means less sales and lower prices," Mr. Mzayek said.

Mr. Ghalayini stressed that the flowers traded in this bourse amount to 85 per cent of total market volume.

"This bourse provides hard currency for Jordan. It exports flowers to Lebanon, Gulf countries, Russia, Ukraine and Yugoslavia," he added.

By closing the bourse, Mr. Ghalayini said, exports will decline by 60 per cent.

"All our flower producers met and agreed not to conduct their businesses from the municipality bourse for its failure to provide a proper mechanism for marketing their flowers," he countered.

Mr. Ghalayini threatened that the bourse will call on nurseries and flower shop owners who conduct their businesses from the Amman bourse, to stage a sit-in in front of the Prime Ministry or the Parliament if the municipality does not reopen the bourse.

Mr. Ahbadi told the Jordan Times that the municipality will not re-open the bourse reiterating that it was practising monopoly by controlling the flower market.

Mr. Ghalayini said the municipality ordered the closure of the flower bourse in April last year, accusing it of not obtaining a trade licence.

Mr. Ghalayini said the bourse, which had a licence,

pressed charges against the municipality and won the case.

He added that the bourse has once again pressed charges against the municipality at the Higher Court hoping to win the case and reopen the bourse.

## Kabariti, Islamists in dialogue

(Continued from page 1)

the government have not achieved any result yet."

Confirming that intense discussions are under way between the government and the Islamists, the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood, Abdul Majeed Dhneidat, reportedly stated on Tuesday that "the issue is still open and a final decision has not been taken."

The "common ground" for a compromise between the government and the IAF might entail postponing the elections in order to meet the Islamists' demand for a broader debate on "a more modern and democratic election law" and allow them to organise their ranks in preparation for the elections, officials say.

Postponing the general elections for a year or two would also strengthen Mr. Kabariti's hand and give ample time to put into force his ambitious reform plans, observers say.

"The introduction of a

more modern election law would necessarily require more time than the few months currently available (were the elections to be held on schedule)," Mr. Majali noted.

However, "postponing the general elections is His Majesty King Hussein's decision and responsibility," Mr. Majali concluded.

Some observers see a strong possibility of IAF members joining the government in case of a reshuffle in the next few months.

A government reshuffle is expected by end of March or early April because, if elections are to be held as scheduled, Cabinet members holding parliamentary seats must resign from the Cabinet in order to run for the elections.

"Out of 31 ministers, 23 are members of Parliament," the government source noted, adding that "those among them who wish to run for the elections would be forced to resign."

## Palestinians reject U.S. stand

(Continued from page 1)

"I don't think that it is wise for Arab governments to judge the agreement as testimony to Israel's commitment to the peace process. The more serious challenge still lies ahead," chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat said in a telephone interview.

American administration officials say that they do not buy the Palestinian argument. "We need to create a regional environment conducive to peace," an administration source explained.

Analysts close to the American government say that the Clinton administration does not look favourably at Palestinian attempts to slowdown the normalisation process.

The analysts say that the administration feels that it is not the Palestinians' "business" to interfere in other countries' ties with Israel.

The American understanding of the issue contrasts the Palestinian need to reinforce the centrality of the Palestinian plight to the Israeli-Arab conflict and consequently the success of the peace process.

The notion of the Palestinian issues' centrality to the peace process was reinforced for the first time since the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) signed a separate agreement with Israel in 1993 when the Palestinian-Israeli talks hit a stalemate last year.

Now that the stalemate has been broken, the U.S. hopes that the other tracks, including Syrian-Israeli negotiations, and the integration of Israel in the region will gain new momentum.

But the reemerging Palestinian frustration has roots in the agreement that they have long sought. For while the Hebron protocols and the attached Notes of Record linked the deal to the other pending issues, they fell short of a clear Israeli commitment to address them in a clearly defined time frame.

The Notes of Record state that both sides will deal with the Palestinian prisoners' issue according to the Oslo agreements but lacks an unequivocal Israeli commitment to release the prisoners within any certain timeframe.

Israel was expected to release women Palestinian prisoners on Thursday.

But Palestinian officials believe

that Israel had deliberately refused to set dates so that it could have the freedom to choose the timing that suits its negotiating tactics.

Among the 34 pending issues are the opening of a Gaza airport and sea port and a safe passage between Gaza and the West Bank.

This poses a serious problem for the Palestinian leaders who are concerned that if Israel continues procrastinating the two sides will enter the permanent status negotiations, due two months after the implementation of the Hebron redeployment, while the interim arrangements are not completed.

The Oslo agreements stipulate that the interim arrangements be completed prior to the start of the permanent status negotiations. Yet Mr. Netanyahu now argues that the protocol and the points attached to it gives Israel the control over the time frame and nature of future redeployment from rural areas in the West Bank.

In his speech to the Knesset following the initialing of the protocols he maintained that since the new agreement stipulates that further steps hinge on the Palestinian security commitment "no combat terror" Israel will have the freedom to control the time frame.

Initially the Palestinians thought that the U.S. will act as guarantor. But the letter of assurances, written by Mr. Christopher to Mr. Netanyahu poured cold water on Palestinian expectations.

After they had sought American direct involvement to get the U.S. to become a "guarantor to the agreements," the letter of assurances reinforced Palestinian fears that Washington has taken Mr. Netanyahu's side, especially that they say they were not consulted. "It was an act of political deception," negotiator Hassan Asfour said.

From the American viewpoint, the Palestinians should not prejudge the result of the Israeli position and give the new momentum a chance to develop.

"There are no ironclad guarantees. Let the process take its course," said one well-informed source in the administration.

But for the Palestinian leadership the course that the process will take, in the absence of guarantees, is the continuation of Israel imposing a fait accompli situation that will prejudice the permanent status negotiations.

## Blast kills 1, injures 6

(Continued from page 1)

"Drivers will park their vehicle on uphill and release the belt that holds the gas cylinders and then the cylinders will roll down and hit the ground," said Fadi Dawoud, 20, who lives near the gas warehouse.

The gas store owners and workers do not follow safety measures and do not want to exert any effort so they resort to this dangerous unloading method," Mr. Dawoud complained.

One of the CDD ambulances rushing from the explosion scene to a nearby hospital collided with a passenger car near the Sports City and Tabarbour intersection.

Six people including three CDD rescue men were injured to the incident and were taken to hospital and were listed in fair condition.

The name of the deceased in the explosion was not immediately provided by CDD officials.

The two people listed in critical condition were Samir Mohammad Zahi, 26, and Mahmoud Salah, an Egyptian national.

Their chances of survival are slim because they suffered from 100 per cent burns," a CDD official told the Jordan Times.

He added that the injured were first taken to Queen Alia hospital but were later transferred to King Hussein Medical Centre.

In December of 1995, a similar explosion rocked the Sports City area where about 1,000 gas cylinders exploded. No fatalities were reported to that incident. Officials then attributed the accident to mis-handling of gas cylinders by workers.

## Israel mourns soldiers

(Continued from page 1)

"In these times there is neither left nor right, we are all soldiers of the army."

Across Israel, flags were at half-mast, cinemas and theatres were closed and radio and television suspended normal programming to read the names of those killed in the accident.

State television replayed footage from the crash scene, interviews with soldiers and statements by military officials, while radio played mournful music interspersed with funeral announcements.

Mr. Netanyahu called on ministers and the 120 mem-

bers of the Knesset to fan out across the country to attend funerals for those killed.

An independent commission of enquiry led by former air force chief David Ivry began Wednesday trying to determine the causes of the night-time collision by visiting the crash site near the Israeli-Lebanese border, officials said.

According to the official toll, the dead included 52 combat soldiers, 13 officers and eight crewmen. This compares to a total of 68 Israeli soldiers killed in combat action in Lebanon over the past three years.

Initial indications pointed

to likely human error as a cause of the accident, military sources said, since rain and fog in the north at the time was not sufficiently heavy to explain the collision.

The Yediot Aharoot newspaper quoted military sources Wednesday as saying one of the two pilots radioed "I have a problem" just before the collision.

Under normal operating procedures, the two big helicopters should have been flying at the same altitude and speed within view of each other, but military sources said they may have turned off their lights as a precautionary measure in order to cross the Lebanese border.

The Galilee panhandle,

where the crash occurred, is best known to the world as the target of Katyusha rockets fired from Lebanon by Hizbollah guerrillas.

Military censured held up publication of news of the disaster for two hours hoping to notify families first. But the sheer size of the disaster made keeping it secret impossible in a country where news travels fast.

The question of Israel's involvement in Lebanon came up again this week following the killing of three soldiers in a Hizbollah bomb attack. Public Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani complained the soldiers, on a mission to guard northern Israel from guerrilla raids, were like sitting ducks.

# Happy Eid



On the occasion of Eid El Fitr, Fastlink is pleased to announce that all mobile originating local phone calls will be charged at off peak rates\*, all day, every day, from February 7th through February 11th.

\* off-peak rates:  
Mobile to mobile: 100 fils per minute.  
Mobile to land: 140 fils per minute.

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Due to the popularity of our current promotions, and in order to accommodate you, Fastlink is pleased to announce that our sales shops will be open from 9:00 am this morning until 10:00 pm tonight.

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## Camdessus: Rise of dollar is best foreign exchange signal for 15 years

PARIS (AFP) — The rise of the dollar heralds the best climate on the foreign exchange market for 15 years, the director general of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Michel Camdessus, said here Wednesday.

An informal agreement on margins of currency fluctuation should not be expected from a meeting of Group of Seven (G-7) finance ministers in Berlin on Saturday, he said, while also warning that the U.S. Federal Reserve had to be vigilant about any inflationary pressures.

The "monetary constellation...has not been so favourable for 15 years," he told a conference at the senate on globalisation.

"This improves the outlook for growth in 1997," he said, referring particularly to France. Since April 1996 the dollar had risen by 50 per cent against the yen and 30 per cent against the French franc. "This monetary constellation is a much better reflection of economic realities," he said.

"Something healthy is happening. The rise of the dollar reflects the good health of the U.S. economy and a strengthening of macro-economic discipline," he said.

"The United States is now the best pupil in the G-7 class in terms of the budget deficit and it has managed monetary policy very wisely," Mr. Camdessus added.

But while monetary officials of G-7 countries could be proud of the success of their call at their meeting in the spring of last year for an orderly rise of the dollar, they would have to continue managing the monetary climate because it remained "fragile."

The Federal Reserve had to "remain very vigilant" regarding interest rates "even if there are no signs of inflation."

He said that "the U.S. economy continues to operate at above its potential level" which, under certain conditions, can lead to pressure on prices and cause monetary authorities to increase interest rates to counter inflation.

## Economic globalisation to continue, but gathering at Davos sees new challenges

DAVOS, Switzerland (AFP) — Economic globalisation will continue without protectionist tensions or fears of a financial system collapse, according to participants at the World Economic Forum here.

However, globalisation and new technologies pose new challenges to social unity, and the financing of social security systems cannot be guaranteed in industrialising or developing economies.

"There is a real feeling of confidence," mixed with vigilance, said U.S. Senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey, who met privately with a select group of political, economic and industrial decision-makers on the sidelines of the conference here.

For the first time at such a meeting, he said, no one mentioned protectionist worries. "The benefits of a free trading system are really unquestioned by a majority of participants."

The political and industry titans expressed their belief that a new cycle of international trade negotiations would have a positive impact on investment, competition strategy and the environment.

New trading blocks such as the North American Free Trade Agreement with Mexico and Canada reinforced the multilateral trade system, they said.

On the global financial front, most of the group were confident in the capability of mechanisms in place to manage crises, Mr. Bradley said. Real time communication allows the injection of sufficient liquidity into the international financial system during bouts of nervousness to forestall panic, he said.

European monetary union (EMU), on the cards for 1999, is a "positive" element that will increase stability of the financial system, Mr. Bradley said, adding the Euro will become a second reserve currency, accounting for about 26 per cent of global currency reserves.

However, some at Davos feared that investors would dump the dollar, which could have a "destabilising effect."

Others worry about a rise in tension if growth slows between a European central bank, whose job will be to ensure stability, and governments tempted to spend their way back to expansion. In other sessions held at Davos, though, speakers said not everyone was so sanguine about globalisation.

American labour leader John Sweeney warned businessmen gathering at the ski resort they risked nasty consequences if they continued to devote

resources to boosting productivity at the expense of improving social benefits.

Deputy American Treasury Secretary Larry Summers said the role of government was to ensure no one fell by the economic wayside.

The rapid expansion of the information society poses challenges to social unity as the stock of 500 million computers worldwide replaces a swathe of manual activity. While the United States spawns software superstars, Europe has a "technological deficit," Intel Corporation President Andy Grove said.

"They are buying computers but few are using sophisticated network technologies," he said, pointing out that emerging economies will soon be buying more micro-computers than European nations.

As for social safety nets, Mr. Bradley said: "There are two worlds, one aging, wealthy and low growth, and the other poor, young and in rapid growth."

The fertility rate, which is forecast to fall from 2.8 to 1.7 in the industrialised world by 2020, is also seen shrinking rapidly in developing countries.

"That means the developing world in terms of social security systems will have the same problems," Mr. Bradley said.

## Inflation in Sudan slips to 101%

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan has said its annual inflation rate fell to 101 per cent in January from 133 per cent in November.

The official Sudan News Agency quoted Izz Al Din Ibrahim, a minister of state in the finance ministry, as saying the reduction was a result of stringent liquidity control, increased production and the stability of the pound.

Inflation is a major problem for Sudan and the government has made fighting it a top priority. It has imposed a tight monetary regime on almost every department and many in the private sector have complained of a lack of liquidity.

Finance Minister Abdul Wahab Osman told parliament last month that the government would bring down inflation to 70 per cent in the 1997 budget.

The government has also reduced its demand for hard currency and has launched extensive campaigns to catch those dealing illegally in foreign currencies in an attempt to keep the rate of the pound to the dollar stable.

Since July 120 people have been sentenced to between three months and five years for dealing illegally in hard currency. The exchange rate has registered little change over the past few months. The official rate for the dollar has remained at 1,454 Sudanese pounds since August while the dollar buys about 1,700 pounds on the black market, down from about 2,000 in July.

## REUTERS

## REUTERS

### The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NIG	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.6466	0.6135	1.4272	123.20	1.3444	1620.76	1.8494	5.5830
DE Mark	0.6072	1.0000	0.3721	0.8670	74.66	0.8181	984.01	1.7234	3.7585
GB Sterling	1.6301	2.6885	1.0000	2.3266	200.96	2.1918	2644.59	3.0177	9.0771
CHF Franc	0.7007	1.1533	0.4292	1.0000	86.29	0.3415	1154.57	129.56	3.8966
JP Yen	0.0081	1.3359	0.4974	1.1579	1.0000	1.0809	13.17	150.05	4.5146
Can Dollar	0.7436	1.2132	0.4639	1.0956	1.09	1.0000	1184.71	1.3628	4.1084
IT Lira	0.0008	1.0147	0.3776	0.0879	1318.74	0.8284	1.140	1.4380	3.0071
FR Franc	0.1788	0.2958	0.1101	25.8289	22.11	0.2414	33.21	33.2100	1.0000

Energy		
Commodity	Last	Previous
Brent	23.25	23.20
WTI	23.90	23.95
Bony	23.25	23.20
Dubai	20.40	20.49
UL Gas	214.00	214.00

Mid-East Currencies					
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4393	0.16399	0.39795	32.8666
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.44851	0.16763	0.38776	33.8893
KW Dinar	3.3063	5.44692	2.0284	4.72144	407.496
BH Dinar	0.3770	0.37063	1.62734	3.79758	327.011
CY Pound	2.0166	3.3261	1.2379	2.8821	248.773

Metal Prices		
Metal	Bid	Offer
Gold (ozs)	344.1	344.6
Silver (ozs)	4.86	4.9
Platinum (ozs)	351.75	352.75
CU (3 Months)	N/A DR	N/A DR
ALU (3 Months)	N/A DR	N/A DR
ZINC (3 Months)	N/A DR	N/A DR
Lead (3 Months)	N/A DR	N/A DR
NI (3 Months)	N/A DR	N/A DR

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)					
Period	-1-	-3-	-6-	-9-	-1-
Cncy	Month	Months	Months	Months	Year
USD	5.40	5.38	5.49	5.75	5.67
GBP	6.09	6.21	6.31	6.59	6.62
JPY	0.33	0.32	0.33	0.36	0.36
DEM	3.05	3.05	3.05	2.87	2.87
FRF	3.22	3.22	3.24	3.25	3.30
CHF	1.43	1.50	1.58	1.56	1.56
ITL	7.37	7.16	6.97	6.70	6.63

Energy		
Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	150.17	Spot
Cocoa (c/lbs)	1317	Spot
Sugar (c/lbs)	303.5	Spot
Wheat (c/lbs)	136	Spot
Soy (c/lbs)	22.38	Spot
Tea (c/lbs)	88.1	Spot
Barley (c/lbs)	2.17	Spot
Rice (c/lbs)	470	Spot

JOD Cross Rates		
Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.439	1.452
DE Mark	0.4502	0.4524
CH Franc	0.4585	0.4608
FR Franc	0.1273	0.1279
JP Yen	0.5782	0.5781
NL Guilder	0.343	0.3449
IT Lira	0.4345	0.4367

\* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1997

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) Situations arise which can make a fellow associate quite happy this morning, so make the best of a good thing. Be more thoughtful of the needs of others later this evening and you can gain respect and assistance.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) Try to be more cooperative with a fellow associate this morning, so that you can become fast friends and make your association more fruitful. Be sure to drive carefully today while you are out on the highway.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) You'll get a good idea for promoting a special talent you possess today, so put it to good use and later tonight you'll get very positive results. You will gain recognition from those in authority so proceed in full force.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) Get your home in order before departing for amusements today and you

can invite guests in and thereby make them feel at ease. Take some time to do something nice for your family and you will become well respected.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Handle your personal correspondence early today, then take time to handle important family matters. Invite some intelligent guests into your home tonight and thereby you can have a many stimulating conversations with him or her.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Focus your attention on updating an important financial arrangement, which could make you rich if the course of action is handled properly. Plan to make property repairs which are needed to make your home more valuable.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) A little charm will go along way today, so make a good impression upon those in authority who can make your career activities quite successful. You can do something to amuse your friends and cheer them up later tonight.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) You'd be wise to go along with your mate's wishes this morning, thereby you can reduce any difficulties. Forcefulness will bring good results early, however, not later this evening when it is important.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Clear up any difficulties which have been disturbing your happiness this morning, so that you can have harmony with your loved ones. Prepare for a social and romantic evening with your mate and you will have a fun time.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) You can advance more quickly this morning by maintaining a more progressive attitude which will gain recognition from those in authority. Finish a discussion with superiors and gain the insight to make your business activities more successful.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) A new contact has the right answer for a difficulty you've been having, so listen to what is being said and through the use of that advice you can become quite successful. Form an alliance with this person which is mutually profitable.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) This can be a very lucrative day today if you keep your eyes open to new opportunities which are virtually surrounding your business life. Later this evening will be good to meet with fellow associates for a plan of action.

## HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) Prestige can be gained today by doing some volunteer community tasks and this will give you much self-esteem. Great business contacts can be made in this way as well, so make the effort to be quite sociable.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) Plan your activities more wisely today and get better results through your efforts. Be more cooperative with fellow associates and speed up production to an unprecedented amount which will make you successful.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) Try to be more modern in your thinking and your appearance, so that those in authority will be quite pleased with the results. Get in touch with some close friends and plan amusements for the weekend which will be very enjoyable.

**MOON CHILDREN:** (June 22 to July 21) Get your home in shape and add more colour and art to it so that you can make your home a real show place. Entertain at home later this evening and dress nicely, however, not elaborate which will offend others.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) A few compliments today can get a group project flowing much more smoothly and thereby make everyone's career activities more successful. Spend the evening with someone you have much respect for and thereby gain wisdom.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 22) Set up a budget today which will allow you a little more entertainment, however, don't neglect your important bills. Drive carefully this evening while on the highway, and thereby you can eliminate difficulties.

**LIBRA:** (September 23 to October 22) Keep a healthy perspective today about going after your goals — don't rob Peter to pay Paul. Keep a reign on your emotions and your temper or you will begin to notice negative attitude from your close friends.

**SCORPIO:** (October 23 to November 21) Privately work out a plan of action which can bring you rapid advancement, with some difficult labour. Show more affection for your loved ones and thereby you can maintain harmony within your residence.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Enlist the aid of close friends today to work out a difficult situation. Be more understanding of others and things will go smoothly. Later this evening you can meet with a fellow associate and devise a good plan of action.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) If you display your abilities today, you'll have more opportunities to capitalise on them. Have more confidence in yourself and thereby gain the attention of those in authority who can make your career activities more successful.

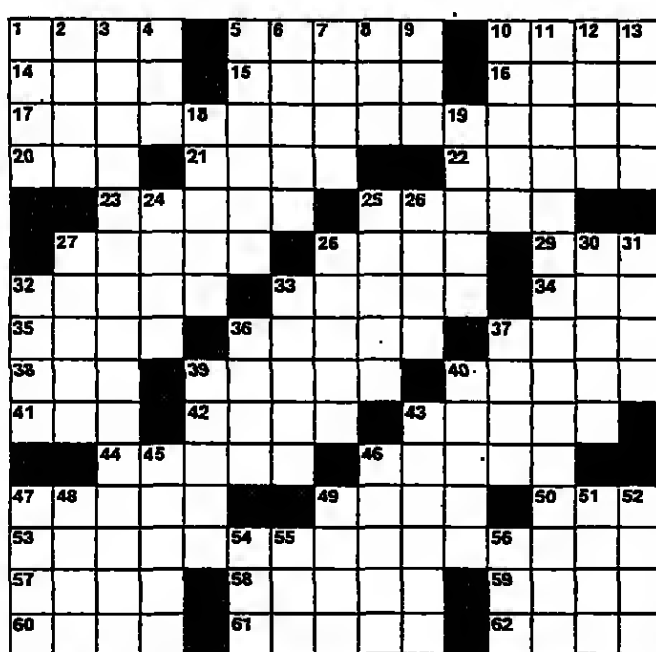
**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) If you want a new friend to go along with your ideas today, it is important to explain them in detail. A short trip with close friends and loved ones will bring you many benefits so follow through and you can have much fun.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) If you show a little energy and enthusiasm about life today, your mate will appreciate it. A short talk with an important person would be good, so consult with this individual so that you can gain insight.

Birthstone of February: Amethyst — Onyx.

## THE Daily Crossword

- ACROSS**
- Cry out loudly
  - Storage structures
  - Stare
  - wonderingly
  - Essayist of note
  - Federate
  - Cinnabar and hematite
  - Final attempt
  - A wood
  - Nautical term
  - Itinerary
  - Measures of length
  - Avowed
  - Customs
  - Question
  - Society girl
  - In good health
  - Veil material
  - Greek letter
  - Gordie of hockey
  - Oniony roll
  - For therefore
  - Malt drink
  - Arrogant
  - Casts off
  - Fish with a long snout
  - Libertine
  - Kind of offering
  - Releases
  - Means of communication
  - Hurts
  - River in England
  - Alphabet run
  - Certain business associate: Brit.
  - Pielet
  - Bogged down
  - Gambling mecca
  - Is indebted
  - Jet
  - Chichi



by James Barrick

S	A	G	S	R	A	T	E	D	S	A	G	E
O	L	I	O	E	L	U	D	E	A	L	E	E
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A	B	B	O	T	R	E	A	C	T		N	B
B	A	R	K		M	I	N	S	K		A	G
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## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



## Mutt'n' Jeff



## Bank of Jordan rise in profit to in Palestine

BANK OF Jordan The bank's profit rose to 1.5 million dinars in 1996, mainly due to the bank's expansion in the Palestinian banking market. The bank's profit was 1.5 million dinars in 1995, mainly due to the bank's expansion in the Palestinian banking market.

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The bank's profit was 1.5 million dinars



## Daily

A review of news from the Arabic press

### Bank of Jordan attributes sharp rise in profit to aggressive push in Palestinian market

**\*\* BANK OF Jordan** Tuesday said its pre-tax profit soared 96 per cent to 13.5 million dinars (\$19.1 million) in 1996 due mainly to rapid expansion in the Palestinian banking market. "The bank's record performance was due to the bank's good profits in Palestinian areas and steady growth in Jordan that was accompanied with just a modest rise in expenses," General Manager Fayez Abu Einain told Reuters. The 1995 comparison pre-tax profits before debt provisions stood at 6.9 million dinars while they amounted to 4.9 million dinars after provisions. Bank of Jordan's unaudited balance sheet shows it grew 16 per cent in 1996 to 625 million dinars from 537 million in 1995.

Bank of Jordan was setting a priority to expand its foothold in the Palestinian banking market. It has five branches there and plans to expand to cover most of the self-rule areas. "We have a target to be present in most of the main Palestinian cities and setting up small outlets in outlying areas by 1998.... there is a policy by the bank's board of directors to expand activities in the areas," said Mr. Abu Einain. Bank of Jordan was the first Jordanian bank to reopen in Palestinian self-rule areas under the Middle East peace process. Along with two other banks, Arab Bank and Cairo Amman Bank, it has captured the major share of Palestinian banking business since a rush by Jordanian banks to resume operations suspended after Israel's occupation of the West Bank in 1967. The bank's aggressive push into the Palestinian market was the main reason for growth last year.

Customer deposits in Palestinian areas rose 61 per cent to 185 million dinars at end of 1996 from 115 million dinars in 1995 — forming 40 per cent of the bank's total deposits in 1996 of 457 million dinars. In contrast combined deposits grew 19 per cent in 1996 from 385 million dinars in 1995. Bank of Jordan's loans to the Palestinian market also jumped in 1996 a sharp 77 per cent to 47 million dinars from 26 million, while, commercial business saw a 72 per cent jump in 1996 from the previous year. In contrast its combined loans, incorporating both Jordan and West Bank operations, rose a modest nine per cent to a total of 234 million dinars in 1996 from 215 million in 1995.

Mr. Abu Einain said the bank targeted a 100 million dinar capital base by 2000 to allow for "the bank to undertake big transactions and financing projects." Its current policy was to reach at least a 20 million dinar capital base by end 1997 from its present 10.5 million dinar level. This was to meet a 20 million dinar Central Bank minimum requirement by end of the year. The bank's general assembly meeting, whose date has not been fixed, will consider issuing bonds and using some of the 29 million dinar reserves to raise the capital base, Mr. Abu Einain said. Shareholders' equity stood at 24 million dinars in 1996 and was expected to rise to 29 million dinars in 1997.

The bank, which has growing investment business encouraged by more foreign currency liberalisation, saw "potential for growth but not for high profits," Mr. Abu Einain said. The bank's focus in coming years remained on bolstering its deposit base with an optimistic 1997 outlook based on a forecast better economic growth for Jordan and progress in Middle East peace (Reuters).

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

**AMMAN** — Jordan is inviting bids for an export-oriented refinery with a capacity to process 210,000 barrels to be built at Aqaba on a build, own and operate basis after finalising preliminary studies.

The invitation indicated that the government had dropped all negotiations with companies which had submitted bids in an earlier process and was adopting a totally new approach to the project, which was being discussed for more than one year.

The new invitation came in the form of an advertisement in the local press on Wednesday.

The advertisement, signed by Energy and Mineral Resources Minister Hashem Dabbas, set an April 30 deadline for the submission of bids.

The refinery, to be located on the southern coast of Aqaba, will mainly aim at export markets but the local market was also open subject to acceptable pricing formulas.

Industry sources put the estimated cost of the plant at between \$1.5 billion to \$2.5 billion depending upon the nature of equipment and technology employed. The number of jobs the project would create also depended upon

the equipment and technology, they added.

The advertisement made it clear that "the supply of crude oil and export of refined products will be the sole responsibility" of the company which wins the contract. That stipulation ruled out Jordanian government intervention with any of its neighbouring countries, notably Iraq and Saudi Arabia, for concessional prices for crude as along the lines that the Kingdom receives from Iraq.

However, industry sources claimed last year that in an earlier process of invitation for bids, at least one of the bidders had an implicit understanding with the government of Iraq that Baghdad would be an equity holder in the venture and would provide its share of capital in the form of crude.

That was based on an assumption that it would take several years for the proposed refinery to be operational and by that time the Iraqi government would be in a position to exercise its free options because it would no longer be under the international trade sanctions imposed on Iraq in 1990.

The invitation of bids said the plant should be "designed and constructed to the highest standards and will have in-built flexibility to accommodate a wide

range of light/medium Mideast oil feed-stocks."

"While the government of Jordan will provide the environment that will support investments in the country, it will not provide specific guarantees for the project; nor will it accept any financial risk associated with the project," said the invitation. "The financial risk associated with the success or failure of the project will be born entirely by the investor," who will also "be responsible for obtaining the financing required to support the project."

The government will simply provide the land and other related resources available locally under "equitable terms, access to limited or critical resources will require payment of a premium," it said.

A prerequisite of any bids, it said, is a "demonstration of project viability."

"The investor should be able to demonstrate that an export refinery is economically viable as a stand-alone operation."

Other requirements laid down by the government clearly showed that it was looking for international giants with proven track record, both technically and financially.

The government support for the project will include a two-square-kilome-

tre plot of land near the port of Aqaba and exemption from all taxes and fees as available under the investment promotion law and the free zone law as well as a waiver of no import duties on crude oil brought into the country for export purposes. But the refinery will pay the actual handling charges levied by the port authorities.

The called-for agreement between the successful bidder and the government will have no bearing on the operations of the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company (JPRC), which has an exclusive concession to refine crude oil and market refined products in Jordan. The JPRC will, however, be allowed to purchase products from the proposed refinery but will be under no obligation to do so.

The benefits for Jordan under the proposed project were defined as favourable prices for surplus water and electricity used for project operations as well as for refined oil products that could be sold to Jordan, the annual rent for the plot of land used for the project and royalty on every barrel of crude processed at the plant.

According to industry sources, the strongest potential market for the refinery could be the Palestinian territories and Israel.

## World had 593m tourists in 1996

**MADRID (AFP)** — The world had 593 million tourists last year, up 4.6 per cent from the previous year, the Madrid-based World Tourism Organisation (WTO) has reported.

Europe remained the region attracting the most tourists, more than half of the total, but its lead slipped to the benefit of the Middle East, the WTO Secretary-General Francesco Frangialli told correspondents.

By countries, France remained tourists' favourite destination, with 61.5 million, up 2.5 per cent year on year, ahead of the United States with 44.7 million, up 3.2 per cent, and Spain with 41.4 million, up 5.3 per cent.

While the Middle East was the region with the fastest rise in arriving tourists, Africa experienced slow growth due to conflicts in several countries.

The organisation said tourism performance last year in South East Asia and in the Pacific region was satisfactory.

The organisation expects 700 million tourists in the world in the year 2000 and receipts in the industry of more than \$600 billion.

Last year, world tourism produced receipts of \$423 billion, including \$64.3 billion in the United States, \$28.4 billion in Spain, \$28.2 billion in France and \$27.3 billion in Italy.

## Yemen signs gas agreement with foreign companies

**SANAA (AFP)** — Yemen has signed an agreement with French, South Korean and U.S. companies for a gas liquefaction project worth \$5 billion, the official Saba News Agency reported.

Total of France, Yukong Ltd. of South Korea, Exxon Corp. and Hunt Oil Company of the United States will participate in the project.

Yemeni Oil Minister Said Al Attar, who signed the deal, said Total will have a 36 per cent share, Exxon and Hunt

Oil together will have a 30 per cent share and Yukong will take an eight per cent share in the project.

The remaining 26 per cent will go to the Yemen Exploration and Production Company (YEPIC).

Exxon, Hunt and Yukong signed a memorandum of understanding a year ago with the Yemeni government and Total to take part in the YEPIC to develop gas reserves from the Ma'rib and Jawf regions in eastern Yemen.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHREISANI											
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEEKENDS 05/02/1997											
P / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JO	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	T'S NAME			
14.3	1.34	13	480	125290	258.50	261.50	3.00+	ARAB BANK			
12.5	0.00	3	1500	4800	3.20	3.20	-	BANK OF JORDAN			
5.6	5.71	19	4950	12058	2.38	2.44	0.06+	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.			
12.7	2.91	4	1388	6591	4.75	4.75	-	THE HOUSING BK.			
20.3	0.00	2	150	975	2.75	2.80	0.05+	JOR. RUMAL BANK			
5.7	7.29	1	5000	4800	0.96	0.96	-	JOR. CULF BANK			
19.0	0.00	33	9592	37962	3.90	3.96	0.06+	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK			
P	6.00	6	752	1049	1.45	1.47	0.02+	UNION BK. SAV. INV.			
16.2	0.00	1	100	337	3.47	3.37	0.10-	JOR. INV. FID. BANK			
INDEX: 198.76 'CHG: +0.92 82 24085 193861											
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 198.76 'CHG: +0.92 82 24085 193861											
5.4	10.36	2	710	1370	1.93	1.93	-	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.			
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 119.88 'CHG: 0.00 2 710 1370											
11.4	7.32	7	1750	2870	1.64	1.64	-	JOR. ELECTRIC PUR.			
9	0.00	65	35850	45226	1.23	1.26	0.03+	NATL. PORTFOLIO			
20.7	4.01	17	11800	10899	0.90	0.93	0.03+	REAL ESTATE INV.			
33.4	0.00	3	750	478	0.64	0.65	0.01+	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.			
13.8	5.71	6	4250	14875	3.48	3.50	0.02+	JORD. INTL. INV. EDUC.			
9	0.00	1	50	53	1.05	1.05	-	SARAKA INNOVATION			
11.2	4.69	10	7500	15908	2.12	2.13	0.01+	UNIFIED CO.			
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 112.36 'CHG: +0.32 109 61950 90308											
18.2	3.33	13	7925	46900	5.90	6.00	0.10+	ARAB POTASH CO.			
10.1	8.00	2	120	1200	9.98	10.00	0.02+	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY			
25.8	0.00	6	2550	6672	2.60	2.66	0.06+	INDUSTRIAL CONN. AGR.			
20.5	5.25	24	5602	20995	3.21	3.24	0.03+	ARAB PHARM. MANF.			
17.9	4.25	4	1650	7756	4.70	4.70	-	JOR. ALUMIN. IND.			
9	0.00	14	19850	11910	0.60	0.60	-	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY			
9	8.96	6	3800	2546	0.67	0.67	-	NATIONAL INDS.			
9	0.00	6	5850	6431	1.10	1.09	0.01-	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.			
P	0.00	5	1700	1361	0.79	0.80	0.01+	JOR. CEMENT INDOS.			
14.1	0.00	5	1744	8611	2.30	2.30	-	NATL. CABLE WIRE, HFAC			
9	0.00	1	800	400	0.80	0.80	-	NATL. PORTFOLIO			
77.3	0.00	18	18450	11748	1.45	1.46	0.01+	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.			
5.2	11.56	7	6450	11157	1.71	1.73	0.02+	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.			
17.1	0.00	18	14850	20105	1.24	1.26	0.02+	JORD. INTL. INV. EDUC.			
25.3	5.00	5	1500	2325	0.93	0.93	-	SARAKA INNOVATION			
28.9	0.00	12	76600	32310	1.23	1.23	-	UNIFIED CO.			
24.4	0.00	7	2750	2769	1.00	1.01	0.01+	TC & VEG.			
INDEX: 118.31 'CHG: +0.79 193 114519 195287											
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 118.31 'CHG: +0.79 193 114519 195287											
156.17	'CHG: +0.82	386	201264	480826	PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEEKENDS 05/02/1997						
20.1	0.00	3	750	375	0.60	0.60	-	GEN. STORAGE			
15.5	0.00	14	23800	13829	0.58	0.58	-	DEAF. FAC.			
9	0.00	6	15500	6975	1.44	1.45	0.01+	IN. INVEST.			
9	0.00	4	700	2025	0.27	0.27	-	US. MATCH - JENNY			
9	0.00	3	2650	1246	0.47	0.47	-	JORD. INTL. INV. TRD.			
9	0.00	17	28400	13866	0.47	0.48	0.01+	JORD. INTL. INV. TRD.			
9	0.00	5	8850	5133	0.56	0.58	0.02+	DIES & MOULDS			
9	0.00	4	550	421	0.76	0.76	-	STREET			
9	0.00	3	3400	1296	0.63	0.64	0.01+	PHARM. 75?			
9	0.00	6	5500	3430	0.61	0.61	-	PHARM. 65?			
27.7	17	17	40000	14005	0.45	0.45	0.01+	CHG.			
9	0.00	3	1000	80	0.80	0.80	-	CHERANIC			
9	0.00	4	1000	779	0.74	0.78	0.04+	POULTRY			
7.6	0.00	10	256750	176950	0.66	0.65	0.01-	IT COMPLEX			
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## Faisali play Romania's Jiul Petrosani tonight

By Roufan Nahhas  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan's Al Faisali face Romania's Jiul Petrosani tonight in the first of two friendly matches held as part of Al Faisali's preparations for the Arab Champions Cup in Morocco in March.

The Romanian team arrived in Amman yesterday on an invitation from Al Faisali. They will play their second match here Sunday.

Prior to their arrival in Amman, the guest team had played two matches in Syria where they beat Al Dimashqi 2-0 and lost to Al Jeish 3-2.

Tonight's match is not expected to be an easy one for the Kingdom's team as Jiul Petrosani is ranked sixth in the Romanian league and have superior technical skills to give Al Faisali a hard time. Petrosani have two professional players on the team including players on Romania's national and Olympic teams.

Jiul Petrosani had won the Romania Cup in 1975.

Al Faisali on the other hand have added new players to their squad for their upcoming championship against select Arab teams. They are: Morocco's

Olympic Khreibkeh, Arab Clubs champion Egypt's Al Ahli, Morocco's Al Raja and Al Faisali.

Al Faisali's head coach has named the players who will take part in the Arab Champion Cup in Morocco: Anis Shafeeq, Waleed Abu Hmeid, Freidon Saad, Raed Jabour, Mohannad Mahadeen, Ahmad Khalil, Firas Khalafieh, Ali Zoubi, Ihab Nasser, Rami Abu Fanar, Osama Talal, Rateb Awaidat, Ziad Abu Shanab, Jamal Abu Abed, Suhbi Suleiman, Hassouneh Sheikh, Haitham Shboul, Hatem Agel, Jiryes Tadrus, Mahmoud Mattar, Jaafar Hamad and Mohammad Mansour.

Two of Al Faisali's top players, Jiryes Tadrus and Mohannad Mahadeen who are still under treatment and showing healthy signs of improvement, were expected to play against the Romanian team on Thursday.

Thursday's match is scheduled to be held at 8:30 p.m. at Al Hussein Youth City. Al Faisali officials said the match might be moved to the University of Jordan stadium at 2:30 p.m. in case of heavy rainfall. Sunday's match will be held at 2:30 p.m.

## United crash out of FA Cup

LONDON (AFP) — Holders Manchester United crashed out of the FA Cup following a 1-0 defeat against Wimbledon in a fourth-round replay at Selhurst park on Tuesday.

Marcus Gayle was the Wimbledon hero, latching onto a Kenny Cunningham cross to head the unfancied South London club into a fifth-round tie at home to QPR.

Premiership leaders United, who have featured in the last three FA Cup finals, went into the match as clear favourites to reach the next round despite being held to a 1-1 draw at old Trafford two weeks ago.

But despite enjoying greater possession in a passionate, entertaining encounter they were caught out by a typical Wimbledon counter-attack.

Joe Kinnear's men soaked up wave after wave of United pressure before pouncing after 63 minutes when Cunningham whipped over a perfect cross for the unmarked Gayle to head powerfully beyond Peter Schmeichel in the United goal.

Wimbledon, who stunned the football world when they beat Liverpool in the 1988 FA Cup final, had the best chances of a pulsating first 45 minutes.

And the Dons, who only achieved professional status 20 years ago, would have gone in at the interval in front of striker Efan Ekoku had not missed two glorious chances.

Ekoku glanced a free header wide as early as the third minute from an Oyvind Leonhardsen cross, before missing an even better chance on the half hour.

Manchester-born Ekoku seemed to have done all the hard work when he picked up a loose ball in the 31st minute and bore down on Peter Schmeichel in the United goalkeeper.

But after running into the box, Ekoku took just one touch too many and Schmeichel raced off his line and threw himself at the Nigerian striker's feet.

Wimbledon may have had the clearer chances, but it was United who were controlling the game from the midfield where Eric Cantona and Roy Keane were in majestic form.

Then Wimbledon's Scotland new boy, Neil Sullivan, showed international class by plunging to his left to keep out England full-back Gary Neville, an 80 to one shot with the bookmakers to score the first goal, almost gave United the lead with a vicious left-footer that Wimbledon keeper Neil Sullivan did well to keep



Arsenal's striker Ian Wright (L) struggles for the ball against Leeds United's Mark Jackson during their FA Cup 4th Round match at Highbury. Leeds won 1-0 (Reuters photo)

out. After the break David Beckham kept up the frantic pace of the game when he surged out of the centre circle before unleashing a dipping volley that scraped the crossbar.

The chances continued to come at both ends with Giggs firing straight at Sullivan just moments after Wimbledon striker Dean Holdsworth headed narrowly wide at the other end.

Sullivan produced further heroics with the save of the match on the hour when he threw himself low to the right to keep out a point blank header from Gary Pallister.

Then came Gayle's breakthrough after which United poured forward in numbers.

And with the game deep into injury time goalkeeper Schmeichel almost snatched an equaliser when he came up for a corner and hicy-

cled-kicked the ball into the back of the net from a Pallister nod-down only to be ruled off-side.

It was also a bad night for 1993 winners Arsenal who failed to reach the fifth round after crashing to a 1-0 defeat at home to Leeds.

Rod Wallace stunned Arsenal with a scrappy 12th minute goal on Leeds manager George Graham's return to Highbury.

Wallace struck his seventh

goal of the season after reacting quicker than Arsenal's England pair, Tony Adams and David Seaman, to a long ball into the box by giant Dutchman Rob Molenaar.

He jabbed his shot against the foot of a post and when the rebound somehow eluded Arsenal defender Martin Keown, he followed up to find the roof of the net.

Wimbledon boss Joe Kinnear, whose side are sixth in the

Premiership and already booked for the semi-finals of the league cup, hailed the performance of his players who have lost just three times in 30 games.

"That was one of the best nights we've ever had here — a truly wonderful occasion," he said.

"The team have been a little tired recently but they didn't need any motivation for a match like this."

"It's a massive boost for us. The lads are on fire in the dressing-room."

United boss Alex Ferguson, whose side beat Liverpool in last year's final, was generous in his praise for Wimbledon.

"They are one of the best sides you will play all season. No doubt about it. Good luck to them. They played a full part in a fabulous cup tie."

Elsewhere, a bizarre own-goal by Steve Foster 12 minutes from time finished off non-league Woking and saved Premiership Coventry from humiliation.

Coventry, the last top-flight side to lose to a non-league club at Sutton eight years ago, were outplayed for much of the 90 minutes of their third-round replay before Foster's clearing header deflected into the net to give the visitors an ill-deserved 2-1 win.

Second Division Chesterfield's teenage striker Kevin Davies grabbed a superb hat-trick in a 3-2 win to send First Division runaway leaders Bolton crashing out of the fourth round.

### SPORTS IN BRIEF

#### Argentine chief bets on Johansson

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) — Julio Grondona, president of the Argentinian Football Federation, said here on Tuesday that he expected Lennart Johansson to become the next president of FIFA, world football's governing body. Grondona expects the fight to succeed Brazilian Joao Havelange for the top post in football to be fought out between a European and an African, with Johansson, president of European football's ruling body UEFA, the favourite. The Argentine supremo added that he thought it unlikely that someone from his continent would stand after Havelange's long reign.

#### English player banned for drug use

LONDON (R) — Ipswich town midfielder Adam Tanner was banned from soccer for three months on Tuesday for taking cocaine. Tanner, 23, told an English F.A. disciplinary panel that he took the drug in a nightclub on December 7. Two days later he tested positive after being selected for random testing at the first division club. Tanner's suspension comes two months after Charlton athletic's 18-year-old midfielder Jay Notley was charged with misconduct by the F.A. After testing positive for cocaine, cannabis and ecstasy. In November 1994, England midfielder Paul Merson admitted to cocaine and alcohol addiction and was ordered by the F.A. to spend six months in a rehabilitation clinic.

#### Graf out for two weeks

HEIDELBERG (R) — Steffi Graf will be out of action for two weeks because of the knee injury which forced her to withdraw from the Pan Pacific final in Tokyo at the weekend. The World No. 1 consulted a German doctor about the problem with her left knee on Tuesday. The injury was not as serious as feared and the German hoped to be fit to play in a WTA event in Hanover starting on February 17.

#### Lewis camp refuses to believe McCall is washed up

LAS VEGAS (R) — This time around Lennox Lewis and his people refuse to believe Oliver McCall is just a washed up drug addict whose major accomplishment Friday will be finding the ring.

Lewis's trainer, Frank Maloney, said Tuesday McCall's ongoing drug rehabilitation programme would not jell Lewis into thinking Friday's fight for the vacant World Boxing Council heavyweight title will be easy.

The 31-year-old McCall's legal and drug-related problems have been widely reported. However, Maloney said, "we were told the same thing in the first fight, but it turned out that he was locked up in training camp training."

"I wouldn't say we were suckered, but unfortunately Pepe (Correa, Lewis's now dismissed trainer) was listening to the rumours and kept telling us that all we were fighting was a drug addict and a sparing partner. This time Lennox is giving Oliver McCall the respect he deserves as a former heavyweight champion."

### King set for new fraud trial

NEW YORK (AFP) — Don King faces a retrial on insurance fraud charges more than a year after a previous jury could not reach a verdict in the case.

Larence McKenna, a United States district judge, ruled there was sufficient evidence to bring King back to court, although no specific date was set.

King, 65, was accused of faking a contract for \$350,000 to cover non-existent training funds paid to former World Boxing Council (WBC) super lightweight champion Julio Cesar Chavez for a cancelled 1991 bout against Harold Brazier.

Chavez testified King paid him \$80,000 to train but told him nothing about insurance claims. If convicted on the nine wire fraud charges, King faces up to 45 years in prison and a \$2.25 million fine.

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with the new play entitled  
Aman.. Ya Ho



## Suspects held in PNA death

NABLUS (Agencies) — Palestinian police have detained several suspects in the death of a Nabulsi land dealer who was tortured in Palestinian custody, the attorney general said Wednesday.

Yusef Baba, 32, died in a Nabulsi hospital Saturday after being held without charges for a month by Palestinian military intelligence, one of eight rival security agencies set up by Yasser Arafat since Palestinian self-rule began in May 1994.

About 200 people joined Baba's funeral procession Wednesday in the Askar refugee camp near Nabulsi.

Said Baba, one of the victim's brothers, said he saw signs of beatings on the body Wednesday, including "marks on his legs and arms, evidence that his legs were chained."

Baba himself had told a nurse before losing consciousness that he was badly beaten during interrogation. Baba's family has said he was arrested because he refused to sell a plot of land to Palestinian police.

The body has been buried after photographing rope marks and cigarette burns on the corpse, witnesses said.

Palestinian security services refused a family demand for the medical report on the death, said Samih Mohsen, an official with a human rights organisation whose lawyers represented the family.

The security services also initially refused to release Baba's body unless the family took it directly from hospital to the graveyard for burial, but they dropped the demand when the family refused to take the body, Mr. Mohsen said.

The family took the corpse to their home, where they had it photographed, before burying it Wednesday afternoon.

"It showed rope marks around the hands and feet, contusions from blows to the head, as well as cigarette burns on the right shoulder," Mr. Mohsen said.

The Palestinian Justice Minister, Fehi Abu Meidin, has admitted that Baba, 32, "had been illegally imprisoned and was subjected to extreme torture which led to his death."

Mr. Abu Meidin launched an investigation into the death, while the Palestinian legisla-

tive council demanded that those responsible be punished. Baba was arrested on Jan. 3 by Palestinian security in the self-rule enclave of Nabulsi. He had to be put in the hospital on Jan. 24, but was quickly thrown back into interrogation despite still being in poor health.

Five days later he was returned to hospital, where he died on Saturday.

Mr. Abu Meidin reported that his hospital file had been stolen.

Baba was arrested for alleged collaboration with Israel, although his family claimed his arrest was part of a property dispute with a cousin, according to the Palestinian Society for the Protection of Human Rights and the Environment.

He was the 12th person to die while in custody of Palestinian police since self-rule was launched in the West Bank and Gaza Strip in 1995.

The Palestinian Attorney General, Khaled Kidg, said that an investigation conducted by his office has led to several arrests and that witnesses were also being questioned.

Investigators also spoke to workers at Nabulsi Rafidiyah hospital about Baba's medical file which disappeared after doctors performed an autopsy over the weekend, said Ibrahim Amr, the chief prosecutor in Nabulsi.

Baba's death sparked a new debate over the human rights record of the Palestinian National Authority, with senior Palestinian officials saying the time had come for soul-searching.

"This issue has to be discussed frankly and clearly, without detours and evasions because there has been more than one victim of torture in the jails," said Ahmed Qureia, the speaker of the Palestinian legislative council.

"We have eight security services. This is creating a situation of anarchy," he told the Voice of Palestine radio station. Saeb Erekat, minister of local affairs in Mr. Arafat's cabinet, said Baba's death would top the agenda at the next cabinet meeting. "What happened is a very dangerous thing," he said.

U.S. diplomat Edward Abington, who serves as a liaison between Washington and the PNA was unusually harsh in his criticism.



RELIGIOUS RITUAL: Wearing rubber gloves, an ultra-orthodox Jewish rabbi sifts through the wreckage of one of the Israeli army helicopters that crashed Tuesday night after a mid-air collision while he searches for human remains or anything that contains human blood. Behind is one of the helicopter's rotor blades. According to Jewish religious law every part containing human blood must receive a proper burial (Reuters photo)

## New cellular licences have no bearing on Fastlink's exclusivity — Saraireh

By P.V. Vivekanand  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Minister of Posts and Telecommunications Jamal Saraireh said Wednesday a proposed issuance of more licences to operators of cellular phone services did not violate a government concession granted to another firm in 1994.

The minister also reaffirmed that the government was fully committed to respecting "every aspect of its agreement" with the existing company and that its intention to license new firms was in line with its pledge to privatise the entire telecommunications sector.

Mr. Saraireh explained that "licensing" did not mean a new operator starting immediate services in competition with the present operator but only meant clearing the way for the new licensee to start work ahead of starting operations on a specific date.

Mr. Saraireh was responding to charges levelled by a prominent lawyer, Omar Nabulsi, who represents the Jordan Mobile Telephone Services Company (JMTSC), or Fastlink, Jordan's first cellular phone company which launched operations in late

1994 under a concession granted by the government.

The concession gives Fastlink a four-year exclusivity, meaning that a new company could start operations in the same sector as of Nov. 1, 1998, said Mr. Saraireh.

According to Mr. Nabulsi, who was commenting on an announcement by the minister carried in the local press on Tuesday that the government intended to license new cellular phone operators, the exclusivity clause means that no new operator would be licensed during the four-year exclusivity period.

This meant that Fastlink would continue to be the sole cellular phone operator in the country during the time involved in the licensing procedures and the actual setting up of infrastructure before the new licensee goes operational.

Mr. Saraireh told the Jordan Times: "The government is fully committed to respecting every aspect of its agreement with Fastlink and there will be no other cellular phone operator in Jordan until Nov. 1, 1998."

"There is nothing in the agreement with Fastlink that prevents the government from

licensing new operators during the exclusivity period," stressed the minister, pointing out that the licensing had to be done now if new operators were to start building infrastructure and be operational by Nov. 1, 1998.

Furthermore, he said, "the government's intention to issue two new licences is perfectly in line with its commitment to privatise the entire telecommunications sector" as part of the ongoing privatisation drive in the Kingdom.

The controversy was sparked when, in a report carried by the Al Ra'i newspaper on Tuesday, Mr. Saraireh said the government was planning to invite bids for two new licences for cellular phone services.

The minister emphasised that the two new licences, to be issued to successful companies in proposed bids, would have no bearing on the government's current agreement with the JMTSC.

He said the conditions attached to the new licences would be that the companies complete on the basis of providing services throughout the Kingdom in concert with the Jordan Telecommunications Company (JTC) and the government gets 20 per cent of

their net profits.

Mr. Saraireh said he expected at least 10 companies to compete for the two new licences and said price and quality would be the guiding factors for success.

But Mr. Nabulsi writing in Al Ra'i on Wednesday, asserted that any government move to license new cellular phone companies would be in violation of its agreement with Fastlink.

"The government's announcement contradicts its declared aim of reforming the telecommunications sector's infrastructure and inviting private sector capital to the sector," Mr. Nabulsi wrote.

He said licensing new cellular phone companies at this point would cause losses to those who have invested in Fastlink and asserted that the move would also damage the "credibility of investments" in Jordan.

But Mr. Saraireh, who also heads the Telecommunications Regulatory Commission, countered: "I would like to know what specific clause or point in the agreement with Fastlink that the government will be violating" by licensing new cellular phone operators.

## Washington to define future role in peace in March

CAIRO (AFP) — The United States will define its role in helping to revive stalled Syrian-Israeli peace negotiations in mid-March after visits to Washington by regional leaders, the U.S. ambassador to Israel said.

"U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright is waiting to meet with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu next week in Washington and with the other (Arab) leaders invited there," Martin Indyk told the Arabic daily Al Hayat in remarks published Wednesday.

"No decision will be taken concerning our role in the Syrian-Israeli track and in the peace process at large and our strategy and tactics before the end of these visits, that is in mid-March," he said in Tel Aviv.

In addition to Mr. Netanyahu, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and King Hussein have been invited for talks with U.S. President Bill Clinton on the future of the peace process.

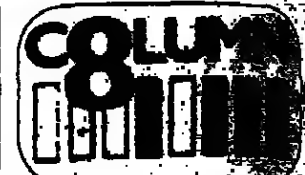
Mr. Indyk said it was necessary to find a formula to help Syria and Israel bridge their differences and resume peace negotiations which have been stalled since February 1996.

"It is clear that both sides are willing to resume negotiations and we can easily find a formula but we can only know the details once we speak to both sides," he added.

He stressed that Israel and Syria were close to peace between 1995 and 1996 and said a lack of mutual trust, the time element and the absence of high-level contact stood in the way of any progress.

On Tuesday, European Union (EU) envoy Miguel Angel Moratinos wrapped up a shuttle mission between Syria and Israel saying the two sides were still far from an agreement on a formula for resuming their negotiations.

He also said "a lack of trust" between the two sides was the greatest barrier for the suspension of talks.



Condom in pie

TAMPA (R) — A Florida man has sued a restaurant chain, saying he found a condom in his sweet potato pie, his lawyer said. The lawsuit said Dalvin Stokes and his wife Carolyn were eating dinner at a Morrison's cafeteria in Winter Haven, Florida, last March when Dalvin dug into his dessert and came up with a condom, attorney R. Scott Bunn said. It "had the appearance of having been utilised for its intended purpose," the complaint said. Atlanta-based Morrison's Fresh Cooking Inc., which operates 155 Morrison's cafeterias in the south, denied the allegations, saying in a statement there were "discrepancies between Mr. Stokes' attorney and ourselves concerning the events and the object in question."

## Chewing gum dates from stone age

LONDON (R) — Teenagers have been chewing gum since the stone age, according to archaeological research.

Elizabeth Aveling of Bradford University said black lumps of prehistoric tar with human tooth impressions had been found in much of northern Europe dating from about 7000 B.C. The size of the tooth marks suggest that the tar was mostly chewed by children and teenagers and that it could have doubled as a painkiller and a glue to remove milk teeth. "The texture is very much like modern chewing gum but it isn't sweet," she said.

## Is it art?

TALLAHASSEE (R) — Police in Florida's capital were debating the meaning of art after they closed a busy street for hours when they were alerted to an artist's creation that looked like a pipe bomb.

The device, four small pipes wrapped with electrical wire and topped with a small white plastic clock, was sitting in the storefront studio of Florida State University Professor Paul Rutkovsky when it was spotted by a city worker. "I didn't really panic. I was like, 'whoa, it looks too real,'" worker Jeff Fleetwood told the Tallahassee Democrat. "I saw it sitting on the table and called 911."

Operators at the emergency number alerted police and sheriff's deputies, who evacuated and closed off the busy stretch of West Gaines Street for two hours before Rutkovsky got in touch with the bomb squad and told them the device was actually a decade-old work of art. He said the artwork, called "The Mail Art Liberation Organisation," had been in his studio since 1986, when it was part of an art show that his wife had curated.

Mr. Rutkovsky, in deciding on the releases, also said that Mr. Weitzman will

believed Iraq was hiding previously built weapons and "we have no reason to believe they are building new inventory."

The German newspaper said the United States could make a decision this week on whether to launch a Tomahawk missile strike at Iraq. It sourced its report to "American security sources."

The United States has launched three Tomahawk strikes against Iraq since the war ended.

The newspaper said U.N. inspectors who were in Iraq between Jan. 5 and Jan. 23 found evidence, according to American sources, that Iraq was continuing to develop missiles with a range of around 1,600 kilometres.

It said U.N. inspectors were "massively obstructed" during their recent visit and Mr. Ekeus wrote to Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz on Jan. 13 telling him that Iraq was contravening U.N. resolutions and that this would have consequences.

Mr. Ekeus, the U.N. official in charge of disarming Iraq, plans to visit Baghdad Feb. 20 to discuss the hidden missiles with Mr. Aziz. U.N. officials said.

Mr. Ekeus has said that he believed there were between six and 16 missiles hidden in Iraq but suspected this assessment was too low following his meeting with Mr. Aziz in December.

Under U.N. resolutions ending the 1991 Gulf war, Iraq must eliminate its weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles before the oil embargo can be lifted.

## New quake hits Iran as rescuers struggle with snow

TEHRAN (AFP) — Another earthquake struck northeast Iran Wednesday as rescuers battled snow-clogged mountain roads to reach victims of two tremors the day before which killed more than 70 people and left thousands homeless.

The new quake measured 5.7 on the Richter scale and hit Bojnurd, said the seismological centre in Mashhad, 250 kilometres away.

There was no immediate word of further casualties or damage.

About 3,000 families lost their homes in two earthquakes measuring 6.1 and 5.4 which rocked northeast Iran

Tuesday, leaving 72 people dead and 360 injured, according to the latest toll.

The deputy governor of Khorasan province, Mohsen Akbarzadeh, said the homes were destroyed in the Bojnurd region. About 72 villages in northern Khorasan, close to the Central Asian state of Turkmenistan, were either flattened or severely damaged, local officials said.

Iran's Red Crescent Society (IRCS) sent teams with relief supplies such as blankets and food to the stricken area, but access was difficult because the roads were snowbound.

President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani has

ordered a special team to the stricken region to assess the damage and speed up relief operations, Tehran Radio said.

It was the deadliest earthquake to hit Iran since 1991 when a tremor measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale left 40,000 dead and about half a million homeless in the northern provinces of Gilan and Zanjan. An IRCS official in Bojnurd told AFP that despite the snow, aid was reaching the victims Wednesday.

The relief agency had so far distributed 1,160 tents and 4,200 blankets. "But we don't have enough tents for everybody, or drinking water and powder milk," the official said.

Iran's official news agency IRNA said earlier the situation in several villages hit by the earthquakes had yet to be assessed because of the difficulty in reaching them.

Local authorities in Bojnurd have urged the oil ministry to supply more heating fuel and appealed for financial assistance from the public for the earthquake victims.

Tehran Radio said sports stadiums in Bojnurd had been turned into make-shift hospitals to treat the injured.

Most of the casualties were in the Bojnurd area, but four people were reported killed and 160 others injured in Shirvan.

The earthquakes also hit the regions of Asferayen, Ghuchan and Sabzevar, and they were felt in Mashhad, the main city in Khorasan province, as well as the nearby town of Neishabur and Gorgan in neighbouring Mazandaran province. Tehran Radio said some 160 aftershocks had hit the Bojnurd area since Tuesday, prompting the authorities to close schools.

The Turkmeni foreign ministry said Wednesday that an earthquake measuring 5.0 on the Richter scale hit Turkmenistan late Tuesday. No one was injured and there was no damage, a ministry spokesman said.

## Celebrated U.S. ambassador to France passes away at 76

PARIS (Agencies) — The U.S. ambassador to Paris, Pamela Harriman, a British-born aristocrat turned diplomat and personal friend of President Bill Clinton, died Wednesday two days after suffering a stroke, the U.S. embassy said.

The 76-year-old former daughter-in-law of British wartime leader Winston Churchill died in the American Hospital in Paris, where she had been taken after the cerebral haemorrhage Monday evening. Harriman had been reported in "serious" condition since being taken ill at the Ritz Hotel in Paris, where she had gone for her usual weekday swim in the hotel pool. It was unclear whether she had ever come out of a coma.

Mr. Clinton paid tribute to

her at the White House minutes after her death was announced. "Our country will miss her," Mr. Clinton told journalists, describing her as "a source of inspiration to me." French President Jacques Chirac praised Harriman as a "great U.S. ambassador and a great lady."

"The president had a great appreciation of Pamela Harriman, who was a great U.S. ambassador and a great lady," said Mr. Chirac's spokeswoman Catherine Colonna.

Mr. Chirac telephoned British Member of Parliament Winston Churchill, Harriman's son who was among relatives close by when she died, to offer his condolences, the spokeswoman added.

## Sudan seeks to end differences with Egypt

KHARTOUM (AFP) — Sudan has told a visiting delegation of Egyptian opposition leaders it wants to improve strained relations with Cairo and that the fighting along Sudan's eastern border threatens Egypt's security.

"The Sudanese government and people are prepared to surmount the differences (because) the security of Sudan is that of Egypt," said the secretary general of Sudan's decision-making national congress, Ghazi Salahuddin Atabani.

Mr. Atabani, quoted by the official Al Engaz Al Watani newspaper, said normal relations were needed "to confront ambitions facing Nile resources and the Red Sea region and to secure the Arab and Muslim countries from the Israeli threat."

A delegation of Egyptian

Islamic leaders, comprising Labour Party chief Ibrahim Shukri, Liberal Party Deputy Ragab Hilal Hemeida and journalist Mohammed Abdul Kuddus, who has close ties with the Muslim Brotherhood, has been in Sudan since Sunday.

Mr. Atabani briefed the delegation on the offensive launched in January by the rebel National Democratic Alliance — an umbrella of northern opposition and southern rebels — in Sudan's eastern border region.

Khartoum has accused Ethiopia and Eritrea of supporting the Sudanese opposition and deploying troops on Sudan's territory. Both countries deny it. "What is going on are Ethiopian-Eritrean acts of aggression that are part of a conspiracy against Sudan," Mr. Atabani said.

Clinton to meet Yeltsin in March  
WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton will meet Russian President Boris Yeltsin in March 2001 in Helsinki, a date Mr. Yeltsin's hugging health date Mr. Clinton will be in the Finnish capital was announced by the Finnish and Russian Presidents in Helsinki, who are meeting to discuss the summit in Helsinki. Clinton said the summit in Helsinki could be the summit in Helsinki. Clinton said the summit in Helsinki could be the summit in Helsinki. Clinton said the summit in Helsinki could be the summit in Helsinki.

Elections  
Excesses of talk  
Jordan ready

AMMAN (R) — Parliamentary elections in Jordan will take place as scheduled in March, King Hussein said today. The King's comments, which came during an interview with journalists and columnists, ended speculation that the polls could be postponed for one year or more.

"I hope the elections will take place on their scheduled date," the King told the gathering in his first comment on the issue and move towards a limited reform within the government of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Sabarri ahead of the elections.

A number of the members of the Council of Ministers are also elected representatives of the people in the House of Representatives, under the Constitution, all government officials.

## Israel to free may announce

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel is to announce next week and will also examine a possible amnesty for Israeli convicted of anti-Arab attacks, government officials said on Friday.

The 20 women will be released on Tuesday, said David Ben-Zion, an aide to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. The scheduled release is more than a year behind the deadline of autonomy accords between Israel and the Palestinians.

But President Ezer Weizman refused to grant amnesty to two women who carried out deadly attacks against Israelis and in a gesture of solidarity, the others refused to be freed.

The prosecutors will have to sign a document promising not to take part in further terrorist activities, a government spokesman said after Israel's weekly cabinet meeting.

However, the exact date of their release has not been disclosed.

Mr. Netanyahu, in deciding on the releases, also said that Mr. Weizman will

## Israel resumes as internal

TEL AVIV (R) — Lebanon's Foreign Minister Fares Khoury said Friday a new had been resolved over the U.S. ambassador's remarks against Lebanon in the deaths of 73 Israeli soldiers in a helicopter crash.

Ambedkar Richard Khoury, reacting to celebrations after Tuesday night's collision, said Wednesday that "nobody should rejoice from the loss of human life whenever the cause."

"Celebrate these soldiers were doing their duty for their country. They are not the ones responsible for the deaths. They are victims as much as anyone else," he said.

Mr. Khoury's comments caused outrage because the military reinforcements to Lebanon which the Jewish state has occupied since 1982 in defiance of U.N. resolutions.

Mr. Khoury, who decided